

PARTISAN REVIEW

JAMES MERRILL

Driver (a story)

ROBERT MARTIN ADAMS

Joyce in the Sixties

DANIEL BELL

The National Style

DAVID T. BAZELON

A New Kind of War

PAULINE KAEI

Little Men in the Art Movies

WRIGHT MORRIS

Shooting the Works

ALFRED CHESTER

A View of Erotica

JEREMY LARNER

Salinger's Audience

Poems and Reviews by John Berryman, Morris
Dickstein, Daryl Hine, Irving Howe, Adrienne
Rich, John Thompson, Richard Wilbur

GORKY AND HISTORY: AN EXCHANGE

Harold Rosenberg and Paul Goodman

4

1962

\$1.00

7/-

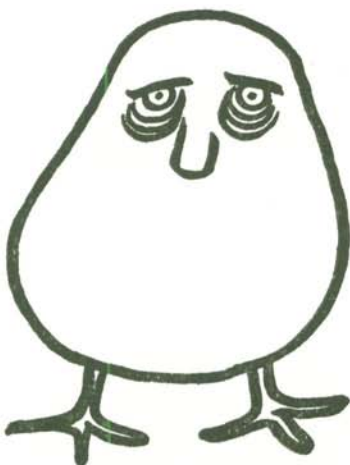
“... The Realist, a shabby Greenwich Village periodical...”

—TIME

“... You practically write Catch-22 with every issue of The Realist...”

—Joseph Heller

Following are the highlights of five recent (and still available) issues of **The Realist**.



- **Impolite Interviews**—unique question-and-answer sessions with such interviewees as novelist Joseph Heller and an abortionist who has performed 27,006 illegal operations.
- **George Lincoln Rockwell**—the Commander of the American Party compares the ‘persecution’ of his group with the case of James Meredith.
- **Terry Southern**—a satirical exposé titled “Au Coin d’Espion: Scandal of the Moon-Shot” by the author of *The Magic Christian*.
- **Case History of the Kennedy Caper**—a blow-by-blow account of the journalistic hypocrisy underlying a recent false rumor.
- **Lenny Bruce**—the so-called ‘sick’ comedian presents a view from Adolf Eichmann’s wife, and takes us on a journey to the land of abstract scatology.
- **The Controversy in the Catcher**—a survey of the censorship history of J. D. Salinger’s classic, *The Catcher in the Rye*.
- **Realist First Reader**—a primer for the sensitive child on the fine art of divorce.
- **William Worthy**—the text of a speech he never delivered: “The Irresponsibility of the Mass Media.”
- **The Problem of Returning Veterans of the Peace Corps**—a tongue-in-the-other-cheek analysis of a contemporary dilemma.
- **Malice in Maryland**—a behind-the-scenes report by Madalyn Murray on her challenge of enforced Bible-reading and Lord’s prayer-recitation in public schools, to be decided by the U. S. Supreme Court.
- **The Trend is Toward Dirty**—an article that asks the question: Who shall teenagers take unto their bosom as the new American folk hero, John Glenn or Sonny Liston?
- **Should Violence Be Met With Violence?**—a Freedom Rider tells of the kidnap frameup charges in Monroe, N. C. against Robert Williams, now broadcasting from Cuba with “Radio Free Dixie.”
- **Modest Proposals**—a Swiftian column with subject matter ranging from a collection of somewhat offensive *New Wives’ Tales* to a set of utterly taste-defying *Coloring Books*.

The five issues described above cost \$1.

They’re yours free with a subscription.

Rates: \$3 for 10 issues; \$5 for 20 issues.

THE REALIST, Dept. PR • 225 Lafayette St. • New York 12, N. Y.

NEW PERSPECTIVES **FROM THE FIRST NAME IN** **QUALITY PAPERBACK PUBLISHING** **—DOUBLEDAY ANCHOR BOOKS—**

DARWIN AND THE DARWINIAN REVOLUTION

By Gertrude Himmelfarb. Darwin's theory of evolution has gradually been transmuted from a heresy to a basic modern piety. This original and lively study traces the history of Darwin's views and their crystallizing effect on currents of religious, scientific, and political thought in the 19th century. A325 \$1.45

THE LIFE OF LAZARILLO DE TORMES:

His Fortunes and Adversities

Anonymous; translated from the Spanish by W. S. Merwin. A sparkling new translation, by a distinguished poet, of the mordantly satiric prototype of the picaresque novel. In a brilliant introduction, Leonardo C. de Morelos firmly places the sixteenth century tale in world literature. Not available in any other edition. A316 \$.95

THE QUEST FOR UTOPIA

Edited by Glenn Negley and J. Max Patrick. The major portions of more than 25 Utopias, now inaccessible, but all important and influential. This history emphasizes the importance of Utopian thought as a mirror of social development from 900 B.C. to the present. A326 \$1.95

ANDRÉ GIDE

By Jean Hytier, translated by Richard Howard. "I think that no one has written anything better on my work."—André Gide, *Journals*. "... everything literary criticism should be: unpretentiously informative, graceful, logically intelligent and deeply sincere."—*New York Times Book Review*. Out-of-print in French and never before translated. *An Anchor Original*. A307 \$1.25

IRRATIONAL MAN

By William Barrett. Now available in a paperback for the first time, this book on existentialist philosophy is "brilliant and penetrating . . . of deep concern not only to the professional philosopher but to the layman as well; to all men, in fact, who are interested in the living thought of our time." JOHN WILD, *Harvard University*, in the *Saturday Review*. A321 \$1.45

THE LADDER OF VISION:

A Study of Dante's Comedy

By Irma Brandeis. In this comprehensive and concrete study the author demonstrates the poem to be one whole, completely integrated work wherein "didactic", lyric, dramatic, symbolic and structural elements fuse to produce the complex unity of the Dantean vision. A320 \$.95

**AT ALL
BOOKSELLERS
OR FROM**



DOUBLEDAY ANCHOR BOOKS

Garden City, New York

PR **PARTISAN REVIEW**

EDITORS:

William Phillips, Philip Rahv

ASSISTANT EDITOR:

Steven Marcus

EDITORIAL ASSOCIATE FOR POETRY:

John Hollander

EDITORIAL ASSISTANTS:

Erika Munk

Jane Richmond

PUBLICATIONS AND ADVISORY BOARD:

**Roger W. Straus, Jr., Chairman,
Harvey Breit, Louis G. Cowan, Allan D. Dowling,
Jason Epstein, H. William Fitelson, Sidney Hook,
James Johnson Sweeney, Gore Vidal**

PARTISAN REVIEW is published quarterly by the American Committee for Cultural Freedom, Inc. at 22 East 17th Street, New York 3, N. Y. Subscriptions: \$3.50 a year, \$6.75 for two years; foreign subscriptions, including Canada, \$4.00 a year, \$7.75 for two years. All payments from foreign countries must be made by U.S. money orders or checks payable in U.S. currency or with \$0.50 added for collection charges. Single copy: \$1.00. Manuscripts will not be returned unless accompanied by stamped, self-addressed envelopes. Copyright 1962, by **PARTISAN REVIEW**. Second class postage paid at New York, N. Y.

Distributed in the U.S.A. by Doubleday and Co., Inc. and B. DeBoer, Nutley, N. J.

FALL, 1962

VOLUME XXIX, NUMBER 4

CONTENTS

DRIVER, James Merrill	491
THE BENT KNIFE BLADE: JOYCE IN THE 1960's, Robert Martin Adams	507
THE NATIONAL STYLE AND THE RADICAL RIGHT, Daniel Bell	519
POEMS	
SNAPSHOTS OF A DAUGHTER-IN-LAW, Adrienne Rich	535
TWO DREAM SONGS, John Berryman	539
HIPPOLYTUS: POLAND, 1960, Daryl Hine	540
A NEW KIND OF WAR, David T. Bazelon	543
MOVIE CHRONICLE: LITTLE MEN, Pauline Kael	564
LETTER FROM VENICE, Wright Morris	578
GORKY AND HISTORY: AN EXCHANGE, Harold Rosenberg and Paul Goodman	587
SALINGER: AN EXPLANATION, Jeremy Larnier	594
BOOKS	
REWARDS OF SERIOUSNESS, Irving Howe	599
THE EXISTENTIAL HERO, Richard Wilbur	603
THE FIGURE IN THE ROSE-RED GOWN, John Thompson	608
REALITY PUBLIC AND PRIVATE, Morris Dickstein	612
VARIETY	
THOUGHTS OF AN UNSERIOUS READER OF EROTICA, Alfred Chester	617
CORRESPONDENCE	627
INDEX TO VOLUME XXIX	637

Eero Saarinen On His Work

One of the twentieth century's foremost architects tells what he believed and felt about architecture, including sixteen of his major projects. Forty-six outstanding photographs, including eleven double-page spreads, taken by Ezra Stoller, Balthasar Korab, Herbert Matter, and others, plus twenty-seven plans and drawings. Edited by Aline B. Saarinen.

Before January 1, 1963 \$12.50

After January 1, 1963 \$15.00

The Pilgrimage of Life

by Samuel C. Chew

A fascinating exploration of the relationship between literature and pictorial art from 1485 to 1642, based upon the author's collection and meticulous analysis of iconological evidence from the Renaissance dealing with the concept of man as a pilgrim, journeying through the mundane world toward a heavenly destination. Richly illustrated.

\$15.00



YALE UNIVERSITY PRESS
New Haven and London

CONTRIBUTORS

JAMES MERRILL published a new volume of poetry, **Water Street**, this Fall.

ROBERT MARTIN ADAMS teaches English at Cornell and has just written a book on Joyce.

The article by **DANIEL BELL** is adapted from the opening chapter of his forthcoming revision of **The New American Right**.

DAVID T. BAZELON'S essay is the concluding section of his book **The Paper Economy**, which Random House will publish in February.

WRIGHT MORRIS recently returned from a six-month stay in Europe.

PAULINE KAELE's articles on film are widely published here and abroad.

A second book of poems by **ADRIENNE RICH** will be published by Harper and Row in January.

JOHN THOMPSON's **The Founding of English Meter** was published a year ago by Columbia University Press.

ALFRED CHESTER is a free-lance writer living in New York. At present he is working on a novel.

CORRECTION: In this column, Summer 1962, it was stated that Susan Sontag teaches at Barnard. She actually teaches at Columbia.



"Perhaps the most
memorable novel to
emerge from Russia
since Dostoyevsky's
The Brothers Karamazov"

—From the Introduction by
ERNEST J. SIMMONS

THE PETTY DEMON BY Fyodor Sologub

Translated by ANDREW FIELD

The remarkable pre-Freudian classic about Evil, sensuality,
and the devils within men's minds.

\$4.95, now at your bookstore

RANDOM HOUSE

A pair of deft allegories by

Italo Calvino

the first — telling the adventures
of an ardent but empty suit of armor
condemned to scour Europe in
search of an aging virgin.

the other — a grisly tale of a Vis-
count who, cut in half by the Turks,
manages to pull himself together,

provide his children with poison
mushrooms, and carry on a success-
ful, ghoulish courtship with a nubile
shepherdess.

"A blend of Max Beerbohm, Ariosto
and Hieronymous Bosch . . . in any
language a delight."

—NEW STATESMAN

THE NONEXISTENT KNIGHT *and* THE CLOVEN VISCOUNT



\$3.95, now at
your bookstore
RANDOM
HOUSE

OXFORD BOOKS OF EXCEPTIONAL INTEREST

PAGES FROM THE GONCOURT JOURNAL

Edited, translated, and introduced by ROBERT BALDICK. This newly translated selection from one of the greatest and most celebrated diaries in the world is taken from the first publication in France of the complete *Journal*, begun in 1956 and concluded three years later. Baldick's illuminating introduction casts much fascinating light on the relation of the *Journal* to the Goncourts' life, and on the violent opposition it aroused among contemporaries. *Frontispiece; 8 halftones.* \$8.75

THE NOVELIST AS PHILOSOPHER

Studies in French Fiction 1935-1960

Edited by JOHN CRUICKSHANK. The essays gathered here all discuss novels that throw light on the relationship between philosophy and literature. The author has written an introduction and the essay on Camus; the other essays are by Ernest Beaumont on Bernanos, Cecil Jenkins on André Malraux, Martin Esslin on Raymond Queneau and Samuel Beckett, John Weightman on Sartre and Robbe-Grillet, Geoffrey Hartman on Maurice Blanchot, Maurice Cranston on Simone de Beauvoir, and Carlos Lyne on Jean Cayrol. \$5.00

THE LIVE THEATRE

An Introduction to the History and Practice of the Stage

By HUGH HUNT. A former producer and director of the Bristol and London Old Vic companies gives an expert and inspiring introduction to the full pageant of the theatre. He traces its history in intriguing detail, and concludes with a survey of its present-day practice and opportunities for developing in the future. *12 pages of half-tones.* \$5.75

STRATEGY AND TACTICS OF SOVIET FOREIGN POLICY

By J. M. MACKINTOSH. This book examines the major policy decisions of the U.S.S.R. made since 1944, the year which saw the beginnings of the Soviet bloc as we know it today. The author shows which types of decisions are likely to be abandoned as unfruitful, and which are fundamental to Soviet policy and of both immediate and long-range concern to the Western world. \$8.00

At all bookstores

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS, N. Y. 16

OXFORD BOOKS

OF EXCEPTIONAL INTEREST

PATRIOTIC GORE

Studies in the Literature of the American Civil War

By EDMUND WILSON. "A book both rich and fresh . . . a strikingly original panorama of the years 1850-1880."—ALLAN NEVINS. "A monumental achievement . . . Mr. Wilson's richest and most rewarding book yet."—WILLIAM BARRETT, *Atlantic Monthly*. "Our American Plutarch . . . It is above all Wilson's success as a re-creator of certain great lives connected with war that makes his book unique."—ALFRED KAZIN, *The Reporter*. Over 850 pages. \$8.50

SURFACE AND SYMBOL

The Consistency of James Joyce's "Ulysses"

By ROBERT M. ADAMS. Through a careful examination of the texture of *Ulysses*, and of the raw materials that went into the composition of the novel, Mr. Adams investigates the author's artistic intent in the work. In this way, by showing what is surface and what is of special symbolic import, he offers a truly clarifying guide to the most rewarding way of reading this novel. \$6.75

NOMADS AND COMMISSARS

Mongolia Revisited

By OWEN LATTIMORE. A lively picture of Mongolia today, by the only American who has traveled in all the major regions of the China-Russia frontier and also speaks and reads the three most important languages of that frontier. Beginning with a geographical and historical survey, the author goes on to explain how Marxism succeeded in a country of nomads, and how Mongolia keeps its balance between the two giants of Communism. 8 pages of halftones; endpaper map. \$5.75

GRECIAN CALENDAR

By CHRISTOPHER RAND. An affectionate guide to Greece and the islands of the Aegean, by a remarkable writer who spent an entire year traveling there. His report, a part of which appeared in *The New Yorker*, is full of information on everything from bus tours to the theater festival at Epidaurus, from classical shrines to the nature of the modern Greek. *Maps*. \$4.75

At all bookstores

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS, N. Y. 16

Princeton



UNIVERSITY PRESS

Conrad Aiken:

A Life of His Art

By Jay Martin

In this book, the work of a major twentieth-century poet receives at last the full critical attention it has so long deserved. Jay Martin draws upon the entire body of Conrad Aiken's writing, up to his most recent publication in 1958, seeking an understanding of the poet's work through a study of its continuity and development.

272 pages. \$5.00

Soviet Attitudes Toward American Writing

By Deming Brown

Deming Brown surveys the publication and critical reception of American literature, especially fiction, in Russia during the first four decades of the Soviet regime. He traces the ups and downs of the popularity of American novels as Party lines alternately warm and cool to Western ideas and, above all, suggests the image of American culture presented to Russian readers through politically motivated publishing and ideologically biased criticism.

325 pages. \$6.00

The Example of Melville

By Warner Berthoff

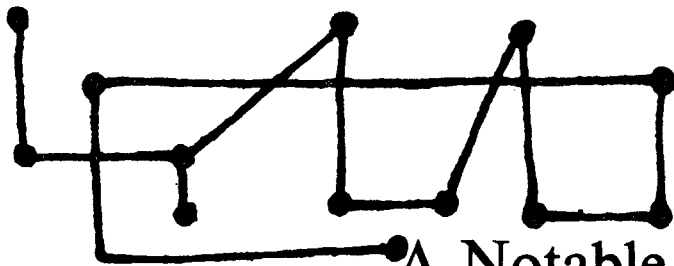
The author here presents an over-all survey of Melville as a literary craftsman. The major aspects of Melville's actual performance and development as a writer are set forth. His use of landscapes and seascapes, his portrayal of character, his first-person narrators, his dramatic techniques, his handling of language, the vital example he presents of a writer's exercise of imagination—these aspects of his artistry are examined from his earliest writing in *Typee* to the much misunderstood *Billy Budd*.

240 pages. \$5.00

Order from your bookstore, or

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY PRESS

Princeton, New Jersey



A Notable
New Journal about
20th Century Music
and the Composer's
Problems in our Society
**PERSPECTIVES
OF NEW MUSIC**

Editor-in-Chief: Arthur Berger
Associate Editor: Benjamin Boretz

Advisory Board
Copland, Krenek, Milhaud, Piston, Sessions, and Stravinsky

Editorial Board
*Babbitt, Carter, Foss, Kirchner, Layton, Perle, Powell, Schuller,
and Shifrin*

among the many features in VOLUME I, NUMBER 1

IGOR STRAVINSKY and ROBERT CRAFT: A Quintet of Dialogues
EDWARD T. CONE: Stravinsky, The Progress of a Method
ERNST KRENEK: Tradition in Perspective
KARLHEINZ STOCKHAUSEN: The Concept of Unity in Electronic Music
MILTON BABBITT: Twelve-Tone Rhythmic Structure and the Electronic Medium
DAVID LEWIN: A Theory of Segmental Association in Twelve-Tone Music
ANDREW IMBRIE: Roger Sessions (in honor of his sixty-fifth birthday)
ELLIOTT CARTER: Milieu of the American Composer
JOHN BACKUS: Die Reihe, A Scientific Evaluation

the first issue will be ready in December — thereafter semi-annually spring and fall
one year \$4.00, single issue \$2.50. Three year charter subscription \$9.00

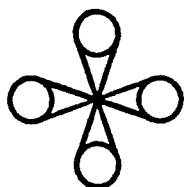
Published for the Fromm Music Foundation

Send check or money order to



PRINCETON UNIVERSITY PRESS

Dept. HR-10. Princeton, N. J.



BOLLINGEN SERIES FALL 1962

THE ETERNAL PRESENT

The Beginnings of Art. By S. GIEDION.
The A. W. Mellon Lectures in the Fine
Arts, 1957; Vol I. Illustrated with over
500 plates, 20 in color.

November \$12.50

HINDU POLYTHEISM

By ALAIN DANIELOU. A comprehensive
study of the faith of more than one-
tenth of mankind. 33 halftones with
text figures.

November \$8.50

HISTORY AND POLITICS

Volume 10 of the Collected Works of
Paul Valéry. Translated by Denise Folliot
and Jackson Mathews. Edited by Jack-
son Mathews. Introduction by Salvador
de Madariaga. Preface by François
Valéry.

October \$5.00

SAMOTHRACE

Excavations conducted by the Institute
of Fine Arts, New York University. Ed-
ited by KARL LEHMANN and PHYLLIS
WILLIAMS LEHMANN.

Volume 4, Part I:
THE HALL OF VOTIVE GIFTS

By Karl Lehmann July \$8.50

Volume 4, Part II:
THE ALTAR COURT

By Karl Lehmann and
Denys Spittle January \$8.50

Parts I and II \$15.00

PROMETHEUS

Archetypal Image of Human Existence.
By C. KERÉNYI. Translated from the
German by Ralph Manheim. A brilliant
examination of the content and mean-
ing of the tragic Greek myth. Illus-
trated with 16 halftone plates.

October \$5.00

PSYCHIC ENERGY

Its Source and Its Transformation. By
M. ESTHER HARDING. One of the most
influential source books in the field of
analytical psychology, newly revised.

September \$6.00

THE GOTHIC CATHEDRAL

Origins of Gothic Architecture and the
Medieval Concept of Order. By OTTO
VON SIMSON. Explores the influence
of the religious experience on medieval
art. Second Edition. 48 illustrations,
three in color.

September \$7.50

PANDORA'S BOX

The Changing Aspects of a Mythical
Symbol. By DORA and ERWIN
PANOFSKY. Two distinguished art his-
torians investigate one of the most
entertaining of the Greek legends. Re-
vised Edition. 68 illustrations.

September \$5.00

Bollingen Series is published by Bollingen Foundation. Distributed by
Pantheon Books, 22 East 51st St., New York 22, N. Y. For detailed cata-
logue, write to Bollingen Series, 140 East 62nd Street, New York 21, N. Y.

James Merrill

DRIVER

A single lesson converted me. I heard the call and would obey it happily ever after. This was in the summer of 1919. My father, back from France, gave me thirty minutes of instruction, after which I was on my own, learning by experience over a network of frail dirt roads flung outward from our village into the surrounding farms. I should be able to describe those roads, those farms. People we knew lived on them. Without question I must have stopped to talk, enjoy a piece of cake or, the following year, a cigarette, to stroke the long face of a stalled animal before, my own face brightening, I leapt back into the sputtering Ford. But I have no such memories. That summer of being fifteen, conjured up today, might have passed exclusively within the moving car. My teeth would clack together over ruts. Off to my right a discoloration of the windshield made for the constant rising of a greenish cloud. I inhaled a warm drug compounded of fuel and field. My feet, bare or sneakered, burned, grew brown, grew calloused. One day at summer's end I noticed in the rear-view mirror a tiny claw of white wrinkles at the corner of each eye.

In those days to my embarrassment, as later to my pride, I was not mechanically minded. Other boys my age preferred the languorous exploration of parts to the act itself. I took as much interest in what lay beneath the hood as I did in visualizing my entrails; that is to say, none.

Quite simply, I adored to drive. Enlarged to the dimensions of

my vehicle, I took on its blazing eyes, its metallic grimace, its beast-like crouch. Or am I ahead of myself? Were not, at first, humbler qualities instilled by those early models? They rattled but stood upright in sober garb. Fallible, they departed like Pilgrims out of faith, theirs and mine. But now I suspect I am *behind* myself: I have no real memory of that Eden of the Model T, in which the car was yet one more patient beast for man to name and rule. Temptations of Power, Speed, and Style were already whistling loud in my young ears. A windshield clearing, I gazed through the forehead of my genie. Other drivers, rare enough still, I hailed silently as having drunk from the same fountain. At night each learned how to lower his gaze, conscious of what blinding foresights were to be read in the oncoming other's. A needle registered the intensity of the whole experience. When I saw my first wreck, complete with police and bodies under sheets, I found in my heart a comprehension, an acceptance of death that has never—or only lately—deserted me.

My parents were amused, if alarmed. "We gave you the wrong name, boy," my father would laugh (I am called Walker after *his* father) but he soon learned to make notes of mileage and to deduct the fuel I was using from my allowance. "Walker, if you're going driving at this hour of the night," my mother would begin. "Your mother's right," my father would add as I rose yawning from the dark oval table where we ate, brushing to the floor, like any destiny they might have arranged for me, a constellation of crumbs. For by then I had ceased to take seriously, or indeed to recall, anything that occurred while I was off the road. The abrupt standstill left me groggy and slow on my feet, as in dreams or on the ocean floor. My parents gesticulated, their lips moved. I cannot explain their helplessness. I was a boy, perhaps in my first year of college: I did not even—but yes! By that time I did have a car of my own.

Once more I have paused to see if I can remember how it came about; I cannot. I can shut my eyes and imagine odd jobs, see my hand, wrist bare and brown beneath a rolled-up cuff, pressing a plunger marked VANILLA—a shiny brownish stream braids downward into the glass; or holding a brush and rhythmically, as if to obliterate any detail that might distinguish such a moment from a million others like it, covering a clapboard wall with ivory paint. I can invent, if not truly recall, the death of a grandparent, a legacy

in which I must have shared to the extent of a yellow diamond or dented gold watch immediately pawned. Anyhow, I drove to college in my first car, old-fashioned but sufficient, and finished my education with honors, having been promised a new car if I did.

What is strange is that my teachers complimented me upon my excellent mind. If only I could think of a single occasion on which I used it!

Towards the end of the summer following my graduation the question of what I was to do with my life must at last have arisen with some intensity. Evenings come back, of straight roads traveled in fury, the dog on the seat next to me listening while I rehearsed manifestoes aloud. "No," I told him. "You may be my father but I refuse to work in the business you have built up. I want to travel, get to know my country. Besides, I scorn both your methods and your product. What are these prosperous times for, if not to . . ." It may be that I ended by delivering this speech to the right audience. More likely it sank without a ripple into those trustful brown eyes fixed upon me through the warm and whizzing night.

I became, in short—but it does not matter what I became. If I am to set down the truth about my life it will not be found in dates and labels but in this brief memoir of my supreme pastime and of those who now and then shared it with me.

My first passenger was the dog I have mentioned. He was brown, short-haired, virtually nameless—we called him Pal. He and I had loved each other for many years. By the time he began to drive with me, habit and trust had taken the place of passionate contact, kisses, exclamations. Neither now had any particular need of attention. Pal's head would be thrust, tongue flapping gladly, into a torrent of sunlit odors. If I reached to stroke him absently he would look round, not displeased but puzzled, then turn with one token thump of his tail back to the window. When I talked, he would, as I have said, listen, especially at night. His face, no longer transfigured by adoration, had grown serious, almost ascetic. I felt he wanted me now merely to illustrate certain still baffling but minor aspects of human behavior, against the day when his own turn came.

A truck hit him, one morning early, in front of our house. The

cook kept marveling over how the driver, "crying like a baby," had carried him right into the kitchen. I found him there on newspapers when I came down for breakfast.

I am glad to say that in all my years of driving I have never been responsible for the death of an animal. Nothing pains me more than those little corpses that accumulate on our highways. The first one rarely appears before eight or nine in the morning—a rabbit, or cat, glittering with fresh dark blood—but as the day wears on they become uncountable and unrecognizable, a string of faded compresses dried out by fevers they had merely intensified. All night they are mourned by shining green or amber eyes. And by dawn they have become part of the road itself.

Not long after the death of Pal I left home.

I still preferred to drive by myself. At college, the car had made me popular. Every weekend filled it with classmates, girls, banners, flasks. I drank from the flasks, I waved the banners, I kissed the girls. And yet it was all beside the point. Their emphasis was forever upon *destinations*—the conventional site of waterfall and moon and mandolin; or else of the shabby 'club' where liquor could be bought and consumed, where one danced to a phonograph in the red dark. Hours would pass this way, pleasurably no doubt. But I think there were few in which I did not once ask myself: How long will it last? When can we go back to the car?

This is something that happened not long after I left home:

One lovely autumn day I found myself on a road that dipped and rose through golden shrubbery and tall, whitened trunks, when out of nowhere, on a steep curve, two figures appeared. They were all but under my wheels before I could stop: an old country couple patiently signaling for a ride. I let them in the back door. They were brown and wrinkled, dressed in patched blacks and raveling grays. The woman wore knitted stockings. In both hands she held a coffee can planted with herbs. As we drove I would catch sight of her in the mirror, watching them, lips moving, giving them courage. The old man carried on his lap a basket of apples, pocked, misshapen ones which nevertheless had been beautifully polished. Perhaps he had not been in a car before; he kept looking about and moistening his lips. I asked how far they were going. When neither answered I

asked again, this time turning to look square in their faces. They looked back. The old man rested his fingertip against the window-glass, appreciatively. I understood his pleasure and was pleased myself to have brought it about. We drove in silence for a number of miles.

Then the old man began to utter noises of unrest. Seeing no house or road, I drove on. His dismay increased. "Master," said the woman eventually; and when I had stopped the car, "There was a road," she said, and waited. I realized that they had wanted to get out, and, rather than cause them an extra inconvenience, I backed some hundred yards to where, indeed, a narrow dirt road forked off.

I followed it without hesitation. An emerald-green ribbon grew between its ruts. Overhead, branches met. I felt a foolish smile cross my face. The road itself soon petered out. We came to a halt in the middle of a cluttered barnyard. Dogs, pigs, doves and a few small, soiled children moved in and out of larger, motionless shapes, a rusty tractor, a cow. One lone peacock trailed his feathers in the hard dirt. To greet us, four young people rounded different far corners and stared taciturn and crimson-eared at the car. Were they all descended from my old couple? I could imagine that, instead of expelling anyone from the garden, God and the angels had found it handsomer to pack up and go themselves, for all that could be done without *their* guidance and example.

My passengers had alighted and were making signs of hospitality. Too young to be gracious, I could only blush and stammer a protest. The poetry of the invitation depended upon its refusal. Each of us, in fact, must have felt as much. In a single gentle movement the old woman set down her herbs, took an apple from her husband's basket, and handed it to me. As I circled the yard they stood waving. A dove fluttered out of my path.

I got back to my original road. The sun, pale and lowering, was waiting for me beyond the first crest. The apple tasted bitter, hard; it could not have been an eating apple. I tossed it away with a shudder. Night fell before I came to a town.

From now on I would offer rides to people. Absently at first, discouraging talk, moved chiefly by the missionary's fervor to acquaint

others with Revelation. I drove well—too well, perhaps. As I rounded curves with a graceful one-handed gesture, certain passengers would look admiringly at me instead of at the road. I was young, husky, I had a pleasant face; people told me their stories. Having little to say myself, I became, depending on the occasion, grandson, son, big brother, kid brother, and would do my best not to destroy the illusion while striving to deflect attention back to the main points, those Olympian secrets of Fuel and of the Wheel. Until one day, inevitably, I added to these a role that by its nature and at my age was less easily given up than the rest: the role of lover.

She sat beside me at a counter one early evening, blonde, full-blown and looking heartbroken. She had to go to another town, not far, but had missed the last bus and was I headed that way? Well, she paid for my coffee and I drove her off. Soon she was chatting and patting her hair. "I thought you'd be gone when I came back with my grip. Sure are a nice boy to do this. Shouldn't call you a boy, though. Bet you know more than I do!"

I can smile now at my innocence. She guided me past her town, past the next. Night was falling, I wanted to stop. Even when I understood and drove without protest, indeed with my heart thumping, down the dark dirt road, her hand reaching across me to turn off the lights—even then I had a surprise in store for me. Opening my door, I started out. "Where you off to?" said my friend coyly. I stood frozen with stupefaction. It was going to happen in the *car*! I forced a casual reply and turned from her to the underbrush, lifting my face to the stars, letting her imagine what she liked, while I tried to make sense of my feelings.

I knew that love was made in cars. Mine, though, *my* car—could I put it to these uses? And were the uses high or low? As for love, I can use the word today, but a molten gulf separated its earlier meanings (a girl to be kissed between drinks, an imitative couple in the back seat) from *this* experience, wringing and intense, that within an hour had left the dry track of a tear on either cheek as I drove deeper and deeper into some dark Western state. The woman nodded at my side. I did not know whether I had degraded or fantastically enlarged the road ahead.

That first love rose and set, establishing a pattern others were to follow. First came days, or weeks, during which the fact that we

desired, but did not know, one another, kept us both good-humored. Then, gradually, at the woman's insistance, our passion overflowed into rooming-houses and hotels, although with luck I was still able to confine it to the car, reserving our shared bed for sleep. Mornings, we drove on; the woman would not mind, not at first, waiting in the car while I transacted my business. Thinking it over, I shall not emphasize my profession by concealing it. I was a salesman, of countless different things, encyclopedias, garden supplies, trusses, religious texts, all or none of these. I would reach into the back seat for my case. The car door shutting behind me threw a switch. Two minutes or two hours later I would be back, whatever had passed between me and 'the lady of the house' forgotten now unless translated into clues: money in my wallet, a thumbnail blackened by a slammed door, more than once liquor on my breath and lipstick on my ear. The patience of the woman in the car came to be tried. We would drive on doggedly, a capsule of discord, she questioning, pleading; myself silent, not guilty, amazed by the recurrence, from one to the next, of the same demands, the same voice first injured then sarcastic before its final sickening fall into a nastiness without nuance or remedy.

I would want only to be rid of her.

I soon learned to avoid these climaxes. At the first sign of strain—when the woman, say, was no longer content to do her nails in the car, but sat making lists of food to buy or friends to surprise with postcards—I would persuade her that I meant to stop several days in a certain town. On being shown to our hotel room, I would make impetuous love to her before going down to 'see about the car' (in which I would happen to have left my things) and driving off into the night alone. Those were hours of resolution, of pride in my lonely calling. The renounced woman roared in the motor and wailed in the fleeing dark.

Somewhere I have read that driving is a substitute for sexual intercourse. I am as good an authority as the next man on both subjects, and can affirm without hesitation that for thrills, entertainment, and hygiene the woman is no match for the automobile. There is furthermore the efficient, even temper of the latter, and the fact that you may obtain a younger and more beautiful one as often as you like.

There were bad moments, though. I had no ties. My parents were dead. I was thirty-five years old, one moving body inside another. What does anyone do in my position? I got married.

Muriel.

This poor, foolish, virgin librarian had staked her job, her room, perhaps her entire future, on a summer's trip West. Up to then she had spent her best moments scanning the heavens above Iowa, filling her little heart with the play of clouds and tints, and her little head with the certainty that if once those skies were seen reflected in some vast expanse of water—the Pacific Ocean for instance—all would be changed, life would no longer pass her by, she herself would turn lovable overnight.

Again, that curious faith in destinations.

She never saw the Pacific, she may or may not have become lovable, but life definitely did not pass her by—I stopped for her. She had been resting on her suitcase at a crossroads; a placard round her neck read *California or Bust*. She saw the car stop, saw that it was powerful enough to take her where she wanted to go. She was too tired, hungry, and sunburned to wonder about its driver. That came later, offshoot of the basic physical infatuation with the machine.

We headed West—my intentions were honorable. We might have gone all the way but for that billboard somewhere in Nebraska advertising a "Motorists' Chapel. Worship in Your Car." My weakness for novel experience within the traditional framework, or chassis, together with Muriel's empty, peeling face, caused me to stop, propose to her and, once accepted, make inquiries that led to the first marriage ceremony ever performed in an automobile. A national magazine paid all expenses. For weeks people recognized us wherever we went. Many wished they had thought of doing the same thing.

My marriage was not unhappy, it was unreal. Legally each other's dearest belonging, we spent, as I might have foreseen, more and more time in rooms, eating places, shops, or under trees with sandwiches and books of verse. "And if thy mistress," read Muriel aloud, "some rich anger shows,

*Emprison her soft hand and let her rave,
And feed deep, deep upon her peerless eyes."*

Parked up a hill, the car shimmered in waves of heat, gazed wrathfully, peerlessly out over our heads.

Muriel's underclothes hung drying on a cord rigged across the back seat. She wanted to settle down. I tried to dissuade her from this step, the one of all that would lose me to her. Had she forgotten California? Ah, she didn't *need* California now! The denouement can be imagined. One cool blue morning that Fall, or the next, I left our secluded cottage—a last rose blooming by the gate, a letter of farewell written and ready to mail when I stopped, if I ever stopped. I got into the car for the first time in three days. A miniature Muriel waved from the house into my rear-view mirror, then staggered abruptly and lurched with a whine out of sight. I was off, life lay ahead one more! In the nearest town faces stopped me. It was the morning after Pearl Harbor.

A voice on the radio was already predicting the rationing of fuel.

I quickly appraised the situation. Six months too old for the draft, I could settle down where I was, with Muriel, in the middle of our continent. This life at best would permit me the daily drive of a few miles to and from some nearby parachute or food-packaging plant. I decided on the spot to enlist in the Ambulance Corps. Weeping over the telephone, Muriel promised to wait. Laughing, I promised to send money. A year later I was driving in North Africa.

I think of landscapes, of roads erased by sand forever rippling under washes of light. A grove of palms, women in veils, the tank burning on the horizon. Above all, a vastness in which hovered black birds of indeterminate size. Whatever the scale, it was not human. This comforted us; we permitted ourselves colorful, passionate acts, at once proving and outweighing our tiny statures.

Made up of volunteers, our company had an odd, aristocratic flavor. Books were passed around—Tolstoi, *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*, collections of fairy tales. These showed me how far I had gone along certain roads never noticed while concentrating upon their macadam counterparts. I found in myself traces of the sage, the pervert, and the child.

Nothing bored me, nothing frightened me. Up from a half-hour's sleep in the shade of a wall, I would face into a warm wind blowing at the exact speed of my life. The laugh and the wound, the word of the wise man and the bullet's sunburst through glass, converged and drove me onward, light as a feather. It became all

but superfluous to take the wheel again in search of casualties.

I see now that I did not belong. My heroics were prompted by exuberance, not humanity. My passengers suffered and prayed and died like the natives of a country I was content merely to visit. I had myself photographed smiling in front of grand Roman arches preserved for centuries in that climate. And then I went home. Sand covered them quickly. The war was won and lost, both.

Ours was now the oldest in a cluster of similar bungalows, each occupied by an older couple or single woman waiting, like Muriel, for her hero to return. This colony, having taken my wife to its heart—"you clever, darling child," I heard her addressed with my own ears—welcomed me avidly. Neighbors came to the door bearing covered dishes. Muriel kissed them, led them to where I squirmed. Poor, popular, outgoing Muriel. I was outgoing, too, in a sense. "Sorry," I would say, leaping up. "You caught me on my way to work."

My restlessness neither fazed nor puzzled them. It did me. Often I turned back after an hour on the road. People were buying anything, I could have sold rocks. And yet—

One day I drove home to witness the following scene. A car had stopped, motor running. My wife stood leaning across the gate, talking to the driver. A bleak wind lifted her hair and skirt, she was having to raise her voice. I heard nothing. As her eyes darted my way the car moved on. Its driver had got lost, Muriel said; she had given him directions. I shrugged. We did live off the main road.

Two nights later I heard the truth. We were returning from a drive-in movie. We had sat, not touching, in the car and watched a couple of starlets barely out of grammar school learn "the hard way" (burned biscuits, Madame de Merteuil for a neighbor, a miscarriage leading to a reconciliation under moonlit palms) that it took two to make a marriage. A mile from home Muriel spoke. "Walker, let's stop here." She had to touch my arm. "Can't we stop."

"If that's how you feel."

"I mean the *car*."

"Of course you do." I pulled uneasily to the side of the road.

"Now let's get out."

"What's got into you? We could be home now."

"Just for five minutes. I want to talk to you."

"All right, talk to me."

"Not in the car. *Please*. I can't think in the car."

"You said you wanted to talk. Make up your mind."

Muriel started to weep.

With my feet on earth, my head emptied automatically. The night stung and shone. Something of that cold clarity may have prompted her words; of those distances, too, without a sense of which the starry sky would be just another town on a hillside, soon to be entered and left behind. I tried to take her hand. These were things she did not need to tell me. At one point a silence fell, long enough for a small oblivious animal to amble past us on the icy road. I looked wistfully after it.

At last we were heading home. "You can keep the house," I said.

"You haven't understood, Walker," said Muriel in a higher, sadder voice than usual. "I don't want you to go. I don't love him—yet. But you're driving me to it."

"Driving you?" I stepped on the accelerator, wanting to turn it into a joke. "You mean like this?"

The car jolted forward.

"Yes!" Muriel screamed. "Exactly like this!"

Then, in our lights, two amber-green eyes were glowing. I pulled out of the creature's way. We turned over.

Muriel was not killed—I have never killed a living thing. But there was no further question of staying together. And early the following summer she and her new husband were drowned in a storm on Lake Tahoe.

Towards my next car, as towards the next and the next and the next, I felt a kind of disabused tolerance. Each could have been my heavy, middle-aged person—not yet a source of suffering, no longer a source of delight.

In fact I have nothing more to relate except the incident which decided me, some weeks ago, to write these pages. Today I wonder if what I have set down leads anywhere, let alone to that warm, bright morning.

I had bought a convertible—not that it promised to change

anything—and had thrown back the top before setting out. It was late June in the South. My road led without warning to a group of old-fashioned buildings, shaggy with ivy and vacant behind pale buff windowshades. A black and gold sign in their midst read STATE TEACHERS' COLLEGE. I had slowed down for no reason—the place was clearly deserted—when a young man stepped from under a lintel that bore in large block-lettered relief the word POULTRY. He raised a careless hand, as if saying, "There you are!" to a friend.

Although I take no riders nowadays I stopped for him. He was dressed with an undergraduate's nattiness: white shoes and seersucker. In my day he would have carried a mandolin. After we began to move he named a town some fifty miles distant—some fifty miles out of my way, too, if a "way" was what I had—then closed his blue eyes, enjoying the ride, I supposed.

He opened them soon enough and, turning to me, made, in the pleasantest of voices, a series of wholly uncalled-for remarks. Cars had grown (he began) too ugly for words. So pompous, so unwieldy. He only rode in them when absolutely essential. The seats were no longer covered in cloth or leather, but some hideous synthetic material. The dashboards were cushioned. As for the color-schemes—well, why not put a bedroom on wheels and get it over with? I decided he was a fairy. I suppose *you* fly, I nearly said.

As if he had read my mind he burst into laughter. His name was Sandy, he continued. He had known I was coming. Hadn't *I* felt, too, that something unusual lay ahead that morning? "Look," I said firmly, but he went right on. I could expect something far more unusual than him. A woman, a Princess, was waiting for him—for us. Already I was part of their mission, his and hers. I felt him watching me closely. The Princess was a medium. I knew what that meant? Good. They had been for many months in communion with a guide—did I understand?—a guide who at last had judged them ready to receive and carry out a set of elaborate instructions. They were to fly that very afternoon to the West Coast, thence to an island in the South Pacific. They had been given quite a timetable of duties, contacts with strangers minutely described by this guide as to both appearance and spiritual pedigree—one of the most useful was to be a thirteen year old fisher-boy who in a previous life had been Sandy's

grandfather. Just what they hoped to accomplish he was forbidden to say. But the general aim, I might as well know, was to save mankind from annihilation.

I shot him a startled look; he was smiling. Beneath his tanned cheeks the young color danced.

"You've seen the newspapers," said Sandy. "The end gets nearer and nearer. Nobody else is really trying to stop it."

Casting about for a badly-needed plausible touch at this point, it occurs to me to mention his "hypnotic voice." It was nothing of the sort, rather a boyish, matter-of-fact voice, yet I hesitate to put forth any *serious* explanation for what was happening. My early impression of him had vanished. In a strange apprehensive sleepiness I found myself hanging upon his words. I thought of the "missions" of my own youth, the awakenings I dreamed of bringing to my fellow man. Rooted behind my steering-wheel of white, sun-warmed plastic, I had a glimmering of how those others would have reacted, as I did now, half with the drowsy numbness of Muriel's favorite poet, half with a heart shocked by its sudden pounding.

He talked the entire hour. Of that crazy quilt only scraps come back today. Good and Evil existed, pitted against one another. He, Sandy, had seen an angel routed by Lucifer in the New York Subway. The beautiful white yarn of vapor-trails was being used to entangle us all by statesmen, adult impersonators, lurching from one trouble-spot to the next. Their explosions in the press and on TV caused a kind of horrible psychic fallout in people's living rooms. Forces in the next world were fighting to reach us with messages rarely heard, almost never heeded. The resurrection of the body was at hand; we were no longer to be slaves of—personality? nationality? His exact word escapes me; no matter. We had reached the town. The Princess might or might not see fit to tell me more. Sandy had already implied—with a touch of condescension which, in my increasingly pliable state, turned my very bones to wax—that I had been chosen from among thousands to help them through this stage of their mission.

"A lot depends on what she thinks of you," he said earnestly.

We parked in front of a willow-shaded Tourist Home. From the car I watched Sandy leap up the steps to the porch and into the house without knocking. A fly lit on my face. I could not have driven away.

He held open the screen door for a girl in a black, armless dress. She was using a cane and watching her feet, in sandals, descend the porch steps. At the car door she hesitated, then turned upon me the face of a middle-aged woman, sick-eyed and freckled, but not by this year's sun. I got out to help her. She motioned Sandy into the rear seat and settled herself awkwardly up front.

I looked back at the house.

"No baggages," said the Princess. "This." She patted a bulging leather purse. It sprang open. She took out a scarf of milky chiffon to keep her hair in place. "Everything gets done for us, so we travel light. You are very kind," she added in the same breath, ridding herself as neatly of the obligation as of the unwanted suitcases. "We—I can say?—*anticipate* kindness."

"I think she means," Sandy began.

"He know what I mean," said the Princess grandly. "He understand my English." She gave a formal signal to depart.

Idiotically, I relished my place in their little aristocracy. It was all so effortless! Poor clods (I thought) who had still to rely on telephones and timetables. I drove with my whole heart, bent on getting my passengers to their destination.

The airport was thirty miles farther on. Noon had struck; the plane would leave at half past one. Leaning forward to make himself heard, Sandy pointed out turns. Once on the straight road he announced as if casually, "This isn't a scheduled flight. A DC-4 picks us up at this field and takes us to New Orleans where a connecting jet to San Diego will be waiting."

I nodded too quickly. We were driving through broad fields.

"Oh, not waiting for *us*. We mean nothing to them. Any delay will be dismissed in the usual way—a motor check, a confused weather report. Don't you know what goes *on* at airports? Let me tell you, it's a scandal. They're debasing something pure and rare. I have to say this in spite of times like now, when their obtuseness works to our advantage."

Here Sandy digressed at length on the subject of flying. I was too much a part of the adventure, by now, to feel the annoyance his earlier speech about automobiles had provoked. Instead, I listened humbly, as ready as not to accept the judgment implicit in his words. I shall not try to reproduce them. The impression he gave was of intense, disquieting enthusiasm for aircraft, for certain models over

others, for the view one came, as a pilot, to take of things. In the Islands, he remarked, they would be flying their own plane.

My self-respect spoke up: "But you don't even drive a car!"

I never felt it took great perception to tell the drivers from the rest. All the same, Sandy shouted with delight. "You knew that! What a beginning! Did you hear him, Anya? He's one of us!"

At my side the Princess started—had she been asleep?—and spoke in a new gruff voice whose accents were not hers. "The road first traveled is the longest road," said this voice.

Sandy touched my shoulder. "It's Uncle Sam."

"Who?"

"Our guide. We call him that. She's in a trance."

I looked at her in alarm. Beyond the whipping scarf her jaw hung open.

"Don't worry," said Sandy.

"It is a long and painful road," intoned the Princess. "It will seem shorter and easier a second time."

"Is this message for us, Uncle Sam?" Sandy inquired.

"For your friend. Wait."

"He's such a darling," said Sandy. "He followed the Princess to America last year and *loves* it. He wants to be the fifty-first State."

Suddenly from the Princess came a high, plaintive, uncertain voice: "Walker, have you learned to walk yet?"

I gripped the wheel for dear life.

"I couldn't teach you. Learn to walk, Walker. Learn."

"All right," I said stupidly. "Where are you, Muriel?"

"Here beside you. There's someone else."

"That's the Princess, Muriel."

"Not *her*," the voice giggled. "Someone *here*. Someone who loves you."

I could barely whisper, "Who?"

The Princess whimpered excitedly through her nose.

"It's Pal," said Muriel's voice. "Your little dog."

My throat filled with tears. My hands fell from the wheel. Sandy must have kept us from driving off the road.

We sat there. The Princess was inspecting me with vague, puffy eyes. She gave me a Kleenex from her purse, and shifted her attention to her own appearance where deeper ravages had been sustained. Into a large oval mirror she peered, touching a fingertip to

her various features, testing their firmness. Soon she was intently painting her mouth.

Without a word I pressed the starter. They were watching, waiting to bind me closer and closer to them, but I kept gazing straight ahead, mile after mile. I had borne all I could. I already believed.

I believed, too, at the deserted rural airport where I deposited my passengers and waited with them. I believed well after they had exchanged that single faintest of frowns with which one tries to shake a stopped watch into running. When I left at their insistence—as if my presence had thrown the wrench into the works!—I drove away still believing.

The road climbed. At one turning I was able to look back and distinguish, in a dream's deepening light, the two figures motionless outside the locked hangar.

Something glittered on the front seat; the Princess had left her mirror. I peered at myself in it—I am nearly sixty—and threw it down. Phony, hysterical pair! There was no more to be learned from them than from those fat 'psychical' studies of the last century, with titles like "Footsteps behind the Veil of Life" and "The Nine Stages: Dante's Vision Corroborated." Though I had never opened one, I have only to think of their Victorian embonpoint, their black or purple bombazines, to invent that whole day with the worst kind of dowdy ineffectuality. Uncle Sam indeed! Would the American Way of Life save mankind from annihilation? Was *that* the level of arcane innuendo from beyond the grave? One thing I knew, though no prophet: their plane would be a long while coming. They might have gone further by horse and buggy.

If I am angry now it is because I still believe, but not in them.

Driving, I kept glancing skyward, prepared, in spite of everything, for the glint of wings. Cross with myself, miles from my road, how gladly I would have hailed an order of machine superior to mine. To this day I cannot see a plane without stopping to wonder, to reenter those last lonely hours in the car—the mirror, face up beside me, shooting provocative flashes into the bare heavens.

Robert Martin Adams

**THE BENT KNIFE BLADE:
JOYCE IN THE 1960'S**

The critic who undertakes to re-examine and reevaluate James Joyce in the light of the modern tradition obviously implies that he has a pretty precise sense of that tradition, of what the *Zeitgeist* is and where it's headed; my first step will have to be a vigorous disclaimer on that score. Professors of literature don't direct the *Zeitgeist* and have no special claim to an insider's understanding of it—or if some do, I'm not one of them. Yet it is scarcely possible for even a backward academic to avoid recognizing that Joyce in the sixties is not by any means the same force he was in the twenties. His books have changed, for one thing, by standing still in the stream of time; they have changed in the mere process of becoming classics, and so a part of the recognized cultural atmosphere; they have changed as a result of changes in our cultural and intellectual weather. All this quite apart from the more or less conscious changes brought about by exegetes and commentators. Defining a few of these gradual changes, which have crept over Joyce and us, may accentuate new aspects of his relevance, and irrelevance.

At least in America, we are no longer obliged to defend Joyce's morals. There is something of a relief in this development, for moral controversy about a work of art usually resolves itself into repetition and denial of the axiom that the artist can treat any subject he wants; and Joyce's subject is not exactly the most edifying thing about him. Bloom on his jakes, Stephen in the whorehouse, and Molly Bloom in bed—these are elements which we find it a good deal easier to digest than the genteel tradition possibly could. We have digested them, without ill effects of any obvious sort; and so, rather

gratified by our exercise of broadmindedness, we may well have carried the hygienic view of Joyce further than the facts will sustain it. A few recent apologists have gone far toward maintaining that Joyce was a kind of Irish Homer Lane—morally and socially therapeutic, intellectually farsighted as well as consistent, a kind of moral surgeon plying his steely art upon the conscience of the western world. The facts as we are coming to see them appear rather more complex and less dramatic. Like Swift, Joyce was a prurient author, as a result of both his temperament and his background. Dirty words and fecal images had a powerful inflammatory influence on his mind; he didn't generally use them (any more than Swift did) for therapeutic or cathartic effect. (Whether they can possibly have such an effect, I leave to the sexologists.) With his vigorous sense of obscenity and filth he combined a characteristically late-nineteenth-century worship of woman as the great redemptive force of modern life. Joyce found in sex a fearful and rapturous experience, the more dramatic because of all the taboos and cosmic rewards he grafted onto it. This combination of extreme attitudes on the subject of sex seems to me rather remote from any attitudes I recognize as widespread in the educated sixties. It is remote from healthy-minded "realism," from romantic promiscuity, or from the impersonal, empty mechanism which is the characteristic form of most modern literary sex. Joyce found in woman a doorway to heaven and/or hell; I think historical distance is making it easier to understand this view and less necessary to react for or against it.

Joyce's view of sex—no longer a revelation from Erebus or Olympus—is starting to be recognizable as a set of dramatic properties supplied by his social circumstances and personal temperament; much the same thing can be said of his politics, his "philosophy," his esthetics. I don't mean to sound condescending or triumphant here—as if at last, after all these years, we were starting to see around old Joyce. I mean only that, having been distracted all too long by questions about whether Joyce is bad or good for the young, or for Ireland, for the recognition of the truth, or the freedom of the psyche, we are finally coming to judge him as an artist, whose work is a structure of impressions. In building that structure, he came about as close to producing a durable scheme of philosophically impregnable positions as artists usually do. As a matter of fact, he had scruples

all his life (honorable but probably quite unnecessary scruples) about his own power to create impressions, and thought himself a forger and a fraud precisely by virtue of his art. That he was a verbal prestidigitator is not the final truth about Joyce, nor is it even true of him in the same degree as of Eliot—whose flats and contrivances I take to be, by now, almost scandalously visible. But it is a real and inevitable part of the Joyce of the sixties, that the things he was able to hang people up on in the twenties—like the theory of epiphany, the bit about Dedalus the maze-maker, and the great Earth-mother image—are starting to look a little threadbare. This fact, which inevitably involves loss as well as gain, still frees us to recognize some interesting things about his art.

Though it is an important element in the working of Joyce's books and necessarily absorbs a good deal of the exegete's energy, the sort of intellectual and mythical scaffolding that he erected has remained largely idiosyncratic. During the twenties the use of classical myth as a principle of structure and order seemed an outstanding innovation of *Ulysses*; so no doubt it was, but this is not the feature which subsequent novelists have seen fit to use, any more than they have been inspired by the Viconian cycles of *Finnegans Wake*. The fact is that for a work of anything less than epic proportions, the mythical parallel is better used as adornment, as allusion, as passing commentary, than as structural principle. Joyce found it particularly handy as a groundwork for verbal and thematic embroidery; but Joyce's habit of mind was peculiar, indeed unique, in its passion for involuted decoration. He may well have inherited this trait, as he liked to think, from progenitors who had produced the Book of Kells; one may also feel that his intricate arabesques serve as a gigantic, complicated trap in which to involve and defeat the reader's conscious mind, in preparation for an appeal to deeper and darker levels of response. But neither rationale is capable of very general application. Whatever its function, whatever its origins, the crustacean, exoskeletal quality of Joyce's patterning has not been accepted as viable by other novelists, and seems likely to remain a personal oddity.

Much more interesting to people who are not professional Joyceans is Joyce's use of language. Here one has a considerable span of performance to deal with, from the stripped and polished subtleties of *Dubliners* to the dark oddities of *Finnegans Wake*. The

first thing to say is that Joyce helped clean English fiction of its thick crust of nineteenth-century gingerbread, and made it impossible to write as badly as was commonplace before him. Of course many others took part with him in this cleaning of the stables, and it is impossible to sort out his specific contribution. But anyone who has prowled the jungle of late-nineteenth-century fiction, fiction written not by abysmal incompetents but by intelligent and often perceptive men, will testify to the stifling quality of the conventions which Joyce and his contemporaries inherited. Puffy and overstuffed language, a flat style, and a general disdain of literary effects—from Gissing to Galsworthy, and not excluding Hardy, these qualities were the rule. Now that the conventions are safely surmounted, it is easy to underestimate the considerable energy which was necessary to overcome them. But this is still only a historical reason for remembering Joyce, and he has better claims on our attention.

When one says that Joyce enriched the speech of English fiction, there is a natural tendency to think of the various taboos he violated, the various censorships he knocked down. The matter is more considerable than this. One has only to look at the first chapter of *Ulysses*, less than twenty pages of prose, to sense the dramatic richness, flexibility, and complexity of the language. The scene moves with elegance and under its own power; the hand of the novelist does not have to tug it along. Symbols are pervasive, vivid yet undemanding. The tonality of the chapter is sunlit, yet under the surface one senses the sulky, resentful power of Stephen's mind, cuddling its enmity. A complex of energies is effortlessly set moving in these pages; the economy of means and richness of achievement mark a genuine imaginative achievement. In the diction of a passage like this, Joyce worked to standards of subtlety, economy, and exactness by which English novels will be measured for years to come; his ability to do so was quite independent of technical innovations—stream of consciousness, mythic parallels, multilingual puns, and so forth.

As it was not Joyce's invention, the "stream-of-consciousness" device which he did so much to popularize can not be laid at his personal doorstep. Historically viewed, it actually does not seem to have been any one individual's contribution, and literary historians of the future will no doubt see it as simply one episode in a process

by which the action of the modern novel was interiorized, its definition of reality changed from social to psychological. Seen simply as a shift in representational conventions, it is less than startling. Experience is caught at an earlier and less complete stage of digestion, but the artifice of expressing it is just as apparent as in the fully formed, grammatically articulated sentences of Jane Austen and Walter Scott. If the novelist had to go into the pre-articulate stages of his characters' existence, and stay there permanently, it is not clear that the device would be justified; used intermittently, it adds extraordinary mobility to the novelist's repertoire of effects, enabling him to move from inner fantasy to outward reality and back again, with a minimum of explanation. What he finds under the surface, too, can be expressed poetically without the implication that his character is a frightfully arty chap. A character like John Updike's Rabbit Angstrom displays, alongside an appallingly nebulous blank of mind and almost no verbal subtlety, an intricate gift of feeling conveyed in complex poetic metaphors. His brains are buried somewhere in his nerves, deeper than words, deeper even than neuroses, in his perceptions themselves; and I think it was Joyce, as much as anyone, who encouraged Updike to see them there. Flaubert said with a sneer that the debris of a poet is to be found in the corner of every notary's heart; Joyce makes good the observation without the sneer.

Of the prose of *Finnegans Wake* it is less easy to speak. If it was an experiment, it was given the most splendid and exhaustive tryout of any on record, and has left a whole generation of writers with no experiments to make which don't look puny by comparison. But the word "experiment" represents a weak evasion here; *Finnegans Wake* is a rigorously rational adaptation of language to the expression of the irrational. There is nothing tentative about it, and one has no sense that Joyce is trying to see what can be done with a technique. Joyce saw the history of a culture and a personality under the image of an immense litter-pile, its clutter arranged in vague layers and suggesting dim but complicated patterns. The manner of *Finnegans Wake* is a direct outcome of a mode of vision. Considered as a complete style of writing (not just a ragbag of occasional tricks), this manner is of relatively slight value independent of the insight it implies. The chief writers who seem inclined to share Joyce's point

of view, nowadays, are the absurd-theatre fellows, who are barred from using *Finnegans-Wake* prose by their medium. One wouldn't anticipate that a technique so exacting could supplant the conventional English of prose fiction (which is rather more a business these days than an art form), and so it hasn't. But the exploration of *Finnegans Wake* by a gallant band of enthusiasts continues with unslackened vigor, even though the book's broader influence remains mostly peripheral. If Joyce's last novel is to make its way, there seems no doubt now that it will have to do so as a unit—linguistic oddities, world view, structural principles, and all. As I shall argue presently, there are some signs that it may do just that; but at the moment, society is moving up on the book, not vice-versa.

The Joyce we have had up to now was Daedalian—that is, he exercised over many minds the authority of a puzzle, which has to be solved on its own given terms and which promises, tacitly but nonetheless distinctly, that it has a final solution. It is truly amazing how many solutions, of remarkably different sorts, have been found for Joyce's remarkably various problems; it is also amazing how widely they are distributed across the surface of Joyce's work. Henry James criticism centers perceptibly around the old *Turn-of-the-Screw* problem, with secondary clusters around *The Ambassadors* and *The Portrait of a Lady*; Conrad's critics show a notable affinity for *Heart of Darkness* and *Lord Jim*. But of Joyce's major (and even minor) work, only *Exiles* has failed to attract a vigorous swatch of detailed exegesis. Whatever reservations one has about its solidity, almost all of this work has been resourceful, inventive, flexible, learned, and practically indefatigable. Outside the great epic poets, I don't suppose any author (much less any novelist) has accumulated so much exegesis; not even the epic poets accumulated their masses of commentary in less than half a century. Joyce, in short, has had an unprecedented amount of critical and biographical attention. Now of course nobody can tell with complete assurance that these researches will not someday yield the complete coherent pattern of symbolic relationships which their creators tacitly or explicitly envisage. (A few of the more visionary have announced it as a fact—every element in Joyce's entire canon is part of a single controlled composition; but most seem to hold it out as a hope or an ideal for criticism to work toward.) But by this time, I think we are in a position to

say that the pattern very probably won't work out. Joyce is not, like Dante, a rigorous and utterly consistent systematizer. The more rigorously you read him, the more loose ends you uncover. The more intricately you explain one set of details, the less chance there is that this explanation can be made to dovetail with anything else in the book or the career. The more ingenious your explanations, the more explanation they seem to need themselves. At the moment, we are under no immediate compulsion to give up on the big-pervasive-pattern presumption—but it seems like a terribly apt time to start looking for alternatives. The reason is not simply that evidence on hand fails to establish the existence of such a pattern; it is that almost all the new evidence which keeps turning up works directly against it. There comes a time in the history of certain projects when someone has to say "We're never going to get a concert violin out of this thing, no matter *how many* toothpicks we use in it."

What, then, is the shape of the new Joyce? I think we must look for him in the figure of a visionary vulgarist, a man whose extraordinary view of life grew out of a defeat for, and disillusion with, the conscious, rational mind. The narrow young man whom Joyce calls Stephen Dedalus exemplifies one terminus of the conscious mind, when he tells prudent, flabbergasted Bloom that "Ireland must be important because it belongs to me." The sort of impressionism he has learned from Walter Pater (see the famous conclusion to *The Renaissance*) culminates in this near-solipsism. On another level, and within the same book, the long dry catechism of "Ithaca" contracts itself into that famous round black dot (which the Random House edition shamefully omits), and disappears into permanent darkness. Having tied itself in tighter and tighter knots throughout the book, rationality blacks out altogether, and the book culminates, not with the achievement of a symbolic pattern, but with the absorption of all thought in the endless spinning motion of the blindly appetitive life-force. Common as dirt, majestic, luminous, and all-embracing, the sensual life of Molly Bloom is, imaginatively, the beginning and end of us all. From the dark of "Penelope," Joyce passed to the deeper darkness of *Finnegans Wake*, and found there such rewards as, after rationality is defeated, remain to a great artist—a religion of man which he could scarcely formulate without deriding it; occult and pantheist notions which he took only half-seriously;

a kind of know-nothing indifference to all ideas and causes, an indifference which he associated with Mr. Dooley; an immense and intricate structure of history which he borrowed from Vico as a frame to hang his artistic patterns on; language-games, macaronic puns, and lists. These materials are contemptible neither in themselves nor as the elements of great art (artists are traditionally, and properly, indifferent to the inherent nobility, if any, of their materials); but their very nature is evidence of the fact that Joyce in the last years of his life surrendered structural control over his materials to certain sorts of accident. There are stories from the biography which illustrate this trend. For instance, Samuel Beckett reports that one day when Joyce was dictating *Finnegans Wake* to him, they were interrupted by a knock at the door. Joyce said "Come in," Beckett incorporated the phrase in the manuscript, and there Joyce, despite the protests of his amanuensis, insisted on keeping it. Even more telling evidence of accident in the composition of *Finnegans Wake* is found in the collection of manuscripts at the University of Buffalo. Among them are various worksheets made by Joyce and his helpers in preparation for the version of *Finnegans Wake* which was published as "Work in Progress." A few of these papers have been edited under the title of *Scribbledehobble*. But this edition was savaged because the unhappy editor, caught between Joyce's deliberate, significant distortions and those due to his bad handwriting, was altogether without a clear rule for his text. No doubt he copied blindly at best, inaccurately at worst. Yet there is every reason to believe that he was better equipped for deciphering the scrawls in front of him than Joyce, whose eyes were very bad, or many of Joyce's amanuenses, for whom English was not a native language. And the *Scribbledehobble* manuscripts are at least all by Joyce. There are other worksheets in the collection, by the amanuenses, which are disfigured by errors of primitive simplicity and staggering grossness. The problem isn't that the manuscript is illegible; more often than not, one knows what the writer is trying to say, but is appalled by inaccuracies which have not the slightest claim to significance. They are the obvious result of someone listening with a French ear to an Irish mumble on an incomprehensibly private topic and trying to write down the result. There is no evidence that anyone, at any stage of the proceedings, tried to straighten out any of this confusion; or if Joyce himself

tried to do so, it seems inevitable that thousands of adventitious errors got past him. There are plenty of them in *Ulysses* (errors of transcription, errors of usage, errors of inconsistency and unintentional inaccuracy), where for the most part Joyce had the conventions of English speech and spelling to help him; whether one thinks they matter or not—whether, in fact, they are all discoverable or not—there are unquestionably even more in *Finnegans Wake*. And it is part of the argument for a “bent” Joyce that in the last part of his life he was writing in such a way that one cannot distinguish significant and purposeful from insignificant and accidental elements of his writing.

His nickname in youth, bestowed by Gogarty, was “Kinch the knifeblade”; and he pursued the metaphor with relish, describing his brother Stanislaus and various other acolytes on whom he used to sharpen his mind as his “whetstones.” That the mind so assiduously sharpened buckled in mid-career, and surrendered to accident, to whim, or to circumstance a great part of its control over its own materials may imply a sort of defeat on Joyce’s part. This isn’t a point to be lightly conceded, and there’s not much doubt that Joyce would deserve well of any critic who showed us a feasible way around it. At the moment, one would have to describe informed opinion as regretfully sceptical that such a way will ever appear.

Yet how much occasion for regret do we (as readers of the 1960’s) really have? Joyce was not a consistent, inclusive, or coherent philosopher, any more than he possessed the power of transmuting metals; but he would not be a man of our times if he had these powers, or believed that he did. The medieval synthesis, out of which Dante wrote so firm and controlled a world-poem, has long since been shattered; there is even doubt now that it was ever as firm as it has since seemed to the eye of nostalgia. Neither Joyce nor any modern writer can count upon that framework of arching, intricate logic which entitles Dante to inscribe, without irony, over Hell-gate:

FECEMI LA DIVINA POTESTATE
LA SOMMA SAPIENZA E IL PRIMO AMORE.

Power, wisdom, and love, here invoked as coordinate forces without the slightest hesitation that they can be shown to work together,

simply did not work together for Joyce—as they don’t for our world, generally. There is nothing idiosyncratic about Joyce’s “bending”; he took it, perhaps, harder than most because the early sense of unusual power and discipline engendered in him the conviction of a special intellectual destiny. No man who sets before him, as Joyce did in youth, the austere and rigorous example of Dante, can fail to be disappointed when he discovers that it is just not possible to write like Dante any more. An early review speaks with lofty contempt of “a young generation which has cast away belief and thrown precision after it, for which Balzac is a great intellect and every sampler who chooses to wander amid his own shapeless hells and heavens a Dante without the unfortunate prejudices of Dante.” Except for admiring Balzac, the elder Joyce might be thought to exemplify precisely these terms of disdain formulated by his younger self.

In a famous essay of the twenties much hacked over lately, T. S. Eliot spoke of the “dissociation of sensibility” characteristic of our times as distinguished from the seventeenth century. Whether our sensibility is more dissociated now than it was then may be debated; what causes led to this dissociation (whenever we suppose it to have begun) may provide further subject of speculation. But the fact, simply as a fact, is scarcely open to question. The division between scientific knowledge and human feeling is not, however, the only “dissociation” we have to contend with; rifts and schisms in the world of the mind are so many and so deep that the modern sensibility can’t be called simply “dissociated”—it is fractured, splintered, Balkanized. For good or evil, the characteristic arts of our age are unstructured; the invertebrate, episodic novel, music improvised or only loosely patterned, maze-like painting, these are our characteristic products. Not only this, but our social life seems to me more and more unstructured. We are in the age of the independent voter, responsive not to the principles but to moods, in the age of the wildcat strike, directed against union bureaucracy as much as against management. Distinctions between cultures, classes, even levels of mental organization are breaking down; witness, for instance, the peculiar ambivalence taken on by a word like “primitive.” I even hear rumors of places where the distinction between the sexes is getting ambiguous.

To such a world, the very ideal of a monolithic structure of compelling belief is irrelevant. Setting aside the nostalgia of my conservative prejudices as unprofitable, I take Joyce as a type of the artist who is willing to live in and write for the future. The world he chose or was forced to choose, seemingly against the very nature of his gift, is the one we now inhabit. Having passed through the latter stages of *Ulysses*, we are entering upon the first pages of *Finnegans Wake*, a murky passage of confused time enlivened only by the incidental jokes of the indifferent. Joyce found not only the available structures of ideas and beliefs, but the very texture of language corrupted; and so undertook, not to build anew, but to write in a way that needed neither conventional ideas nor conventional language. His problem was one which it may not seem too pretentious to describe as a general problem of our time—how to wash clean in dirty water, how to do worthwhile work with bent, second-hand tools. *Finnegans Wake* may be perceived very handsomely as a game of billiards played

*On a cloth untrue
With a twisted cue
And elliptical billiard balls.*

In its pages, Joyce has successfully performed the reduction of the arts to philology, and so far as is possible re-enacted the creation of the cosmos (a new and private cosmos) within the proscenium of his peculiar gift. That he was able to do this using only the junk and litter of the original cosmos is a splendid achievement; but its splendor need not blind us to its perversity, and its perversity cannot be judged independently of the age to which it is a response. Thus we circle back to the *Zeitgeist*, about which it seems we must have opinions.

What Joyce saw (and it is an inevitable part of my argument that he saw truly) was an age of bind and smudge; of consciousness and above all of self-consciousness almost infinite in extent but foggy and unformulated in its topography. A peculiarity of modern feeling, as evident in Franz Kafka and Jackson Pollock as in *Finnegans Wake*, is loss of horizon, obliteration of perspective. Experience flickers through the darkroom of our consciousness like a film projected

immensely too fast—out of control, altogether. With straining eyes and anxious small gestures we try to follow the flicker or even react to it; but our best postures are hollow and irrelevant. The language itself is *vermoulu*; the wells of thought and feeling have been fouled. The art of the later Joyce lies in extracting a kind of bubbling gaiety, a verbal vaudeville, from the desolation of this landscape. The old controversy roused by *Ulysses* over Joyce's alleged pessimism or optimism thus fades, for the 1960's, into a mere matter of emphasis. In particular, the view of Joyce as an intricate, unwearying cosmic ironist (a view which leads Hugh Kenner, for example, to see the *Portrait* as primarily an extended assault on Stephen and *Ulysses* as primarily an extended assault on Bloom) seems bound to fade. Joyce did not seek or make a desolation, he found it as in the air we breathe, and extracted from it the juice of a small and flickering joy. He is not the greatest modern ironist, he is the only great modern humorist.

One last speculation. The less we see Joyce's work as an intricate, logically arranged machinery of glittering, sterile edges, and the more we emphasize the commonness of his materials, the more we are likely to think his art itself a work of magic—one which touches, through intuitive insight, the chords of secret, irrational sympathies. These are not fashionable concepts in modern criticism, any more than in modern psychology; but modern criticism and psychology may well be obsolete before *Ulysses* is. In any event, Joyce (following Baudelaire and Mallarmé) himself accepted and made use of substantially this view of his art. An age more impressed than our own by its inability to understand its own reactions may well revert to a view of Joyce as verbal necromancer, if only because the fact of his impact is there, and the available ways of accounting for it are patently inadequate. The middle ages, Bloomishly fond of adapting antique temples into habitable hovels, reworked Apuleius and Virgil into the semblance of warlocks; very probably, in a century or so, the same process will be under way with Joyce. The new age will find, though, that Joyce has been beforehand with them—having not only constructed his own inimitable architectures, but himself pulled some of them down to make shanties and outhouses.

Daniel Bell

THE NATIONAL STYLE AND THE RADICAL RIGHT

The American has never yet had to face the trials of Job. . . . Hitherto America has been the land of universal good will, confidence in life, inexperience of poisons. Until yesterday, it believed itself immune from the hereditary plagues of mankind. It could not credit the danger of being suffocated or infected by any sinister principle . . .

George Santayana,
*Character and Opinion
in the United States*

Every country has a “national style,” its distinctive way of meeting the problems of order and adaptation, of conflict and consensus, of individual ends and communal welfare, that confront any society. The “national style” is a compound of the values and the national character of a country. And, as anyone who has read travelers’ accounts knows, there has long been agreement on the characteristics of the American style.

The American has been marked by a sense of achievement, of activism, of being on the move, of an eagerness for experience. Europe represented the past, with its hierarchies, its fixed statuses, its ties to antiquity. America was always “future-oriented.” The American “makes” himself, and in so doing transforms himself, society, and

Copyright, 1962, by Daniel Bell

nature. In Jefferson's deism, God was not a transcendental being but a "Workman" whose intricate design was being unfolded on the American continent. The achievement pattern was envisaged as an "endless future," a life of constant improvement. Education meant preparation for a career rather than cultivation. When Samuel Gompers, the immigrant labor leader, was asked what labor's goal was, he gauged the American spirit shrewdly in answering, simply, "more."

Hand in hand with achievement went a sense of optimism, the feeling that life was tractable, the environment manipulable, anything possible. The American, the once-born man, was the "sky-blue, healthy-minded moralist" to whom sin and evil were, in Emerson's phrase, merely the "soul's mumps and measles and whooping cough." In this sense the American has been Graham Greene's "quiet American," or, to Santayana, "inexperienced of poisons." And for this reason Europeans have always found America lacking in a sense of the esthetic, the tragic, or the decadent.

American achievement and masculine optimism created a buoyant sense of progress, almost of omnipotence. America had never been defeated. America was getting bigger and better. America was always first. It had the tallest buildings, the biggest dams, the largest cities. "The most striking expression of [the American's] materialism," remarked Santayana, "is his singular preoccupation with quantity."

All of this was reflected in distinctive aspects of character. The emphasis on achievement was an emphasis on the individual. The idea that society is a system of social arrangements that limits the range of individual behavior was an abstraction essentially alien to American thought; reality was concrete and empirical, and the individual was the moral unit of action. That peculiar American inversion of Protestantism, the moralizing style, found its focus in the idea of reform; but it was the reform of the individual, not of social institutions. To reform meant to remedy defects of character, and the American reform movements of the nineteenth century concentrated on sin, drink, gambling, prostitution, and other aspects of individual behavior. In politics, the moralistic residue led to black-and-white judgments, and if anything was wrong the individual was to blame. Since there were good men and bad men, the problem was to choose the good and eschew the bad. Any defect in policy

flowed from a defect in the individual, and a change in policy could begin only by finding the culprit.

This pattern of achievement, of optimism and progress, and the emphasis on the individual as the unit of concern, found expression in what W. W. Rostow has called the "classic" American style.¹ The American way was one of *ad hoc* compromise derived from an implicit consensus. In American political debates, there was rarely, except for the Civil War, an appeal to "first principles," as there was, say, in France, where every political division was rooted in the alignments of the French Revolution or in attitudes toward clericalism and the Catholic Church. In the United States there were three unspoken assumptions: that the values of the individual were to be maximized, that rising material wealth would dissolve all strains resulting from inequality, and that experience would provide solutions for all future problems.

In the last fifteen years, the national self-consciousness has received a profound shock. At the end of World War II, American productivity and American prodigality were going to inspire an archaic Europe and a backward colonial system. But the American century quickly vanished. The fall of China, the stalemate in Korea, the eruption of anti-colonialism (with the United States cast bewilderingly among the arch-villains), the higher growth rates in the western European economies at a time when our own growth has slowed considerably, and the continued claims of Khrushchev that Communism is the wave of the future, have by now shattered the belief which Americans had in their own omnipotence, and left, almost, a free-floating anxiety about the future. In a crudely symbolic way, the Russian sputniks trumped this country on its own boastful claim of always being first. Getting to the moon first may be, as many scientists assert, of little scientific value, and the huge sums required for such a venture might be spent more wisely for medical work, housing or scientific research, but having set the "rules of the game," the United States is unable to withdraw even though, in its newly acquired sophistication, it has begun to realize that such competitions are rather childish.

But these immediate crises of nerve only reflect deeper challenges

1. In *The American Style*, Elting E. Morrison, Editor. Little Brown, 1960.

to the adequacy of America's classic national style. For that style with its *ad hoc* compromise and day-to-day patching of problems, rather than the formulation of consistent policy, no longer gives us guides to action. The classic notion was that the individual was the unit of action. But the chief realization of the past thirty years is that not the *individual* but *collectivities*—corporations, labor unions, farm organizations, pressure groups—have become the units of social action, and that individual rights, in many instances, derive from group rights, or have become fused with them. But other than the thin veil of the “public consensus” we have few guide lines, let alone a principle of distributive justice, to regulate or check the arbitrary power of many of these collectivities.

A second sign that the classic style has broken down appears in the lack of any institutional means for creating and maintaining necessary public service. On the municipal level, the complicated political swapping among hundreds of dispersed polities within a unified economic region, each seeking its own bargains in water supply, sewage disposal, roads, parks, recreation areas, crime regulation, transit, and so on, makes a mockery of the *ad hoc* process. Without some planning along viable regional lines, local community life is bound to disintegrate under the burdens of mounting taxes and social disarray.

And, third, foreign policy has foundered because every administration has had difficulty in defining a national interest, morally rooted, whose policies can be realistically tailored to the capacities and constraints imposed by the actualities of world power. The easy temptation—and it is the theme of the radical Right—is the tough-talking call for “action.” This emphasis on action, on getting things done, on results, is a dominant aspect of the traditional American character. The moralizing style, with its focus on sin and on the culpability of the individual, finds it hard to accept social forces as a convincing explanation of failure, and prefers “action” instead. Americans have rarely known how to sweat it out, to wait, to calculate in historical terms, to learn that “action” cannot easily reverse social drifts whose courses were charted long ago. The “liberation” policy of the first Eisenhower administration was but a hollow moralism, deriving from the lack of any consistent policy, other than the traditional need to seem “activist,” rather than from

a realistic assessment of the possibility of undermining Soviet power in eastern Europe. Until recently, there has been little evidence that American foreign policy is guided by a sense of historical time and an accurate assessment of social forces.

Styles of action reflect the character of a society. The classic style was worked out during a period when America was an agrarian, relatively homogeneous society, isolated from the world at large, so that *ad hoc* measures were a realistic way of dealing with new strains. As an adaptive mechanism, it served to bring new groups *into* society. But styles of action, like rhetoric, have a habit of outliving institutions. And the classic style in no way reflects the deep structural changes that have been taking place in American life in the past quarter of a century.

II

The psychological stock-in-trade of the radical Right is an “ideologizing” of the American style. It rests on a three-fold appeal: the breakdown of moral fiber in the United States; a conspiracy theory about a “control apparatus” in the government which is selling out the country; and a detailed forecast regarding the Communist “take-over” of the United States.

Central to the appeal of the radical Right is the argument that old-fashioned patriotism has been subverted by the cosmopolitan intellectual. An editorial in the *National Review* on the space flight of astronaut John Glenn sums up this theme in striking fashion. Glenn, said the editorial, is an authentic American hero because he is unashamed to say that he gets a thrill when the American flag goes by and because he will openly acknowledge the guidance of God.

It is ‘American’ as in older storybooks, as in legends, and myths and dreams—brought up to technological date, of course—as, let’s say it plainly, in the pre-1930 Fourth of July celebrations; and the *Saturday Evening Post* covers before they, too, not long ago, went modern; and a touch of soap opera. Yes, a bit corny—for that is the traditional American style. Too corny by far for the Norman Cousinses, Arthur Schlesingers, Adlai Stevensons, Henry Steele Commagers, Max Lerner, John

Kenneth Galbraiths, and those others of our enlightened age—so many of them now fluttering around the Kennedy throne—who have long left behind the old provincial corn for a headier global view.

Here one finds the praise of the “simple virtues”—they are always simple—the evocation of small town life and the uncluttered Arcadia, against the modern, the sophisticated, the cosmopolitan. But the Glenn flight, according to the editorial, proved more: it proved the victory of “man” against the “mechanical” and implicitly, against the intellectual. “This and that went wrong, we all learned, with the unbelievably complex mechanism of Glenn’s ship, as it whirled through the emptiness of Space,” continued the *National Review*.

The attitude control thingamajigs didn’t work right. There were troubles in some of the communication instruments. . . . This and that went wrong with the mechanism, and man took over and brought Friendship 7 to its strange harbor. . . . And that is fine news, though it should hardly be news. It is good technically, because we Americans with our gadgetry obsession and our wish for too much convenience, safety and comfort, tend to crowd all our machines and vehicles with too immensely many tricky devices. Every additional transistor in these automatic mechanisms means that many more connections to loosen; every valve can fail to open; every fuse can blow. . . . It is better news still, philosophically, we might say, because it reminds us that there is no such thing, and never will be, as a “thinking” machine. Only man thinks, wills, decides, dares. No machine, on land, in sea, air or space, can do man’s job for him: can choose, for good or ill.

The fact that “man” is also the one who designs the machine is, of course, beside the point of the editorial. Its implication is fairly clear: don’t let anyone tell us that space (or politics, or economics, or life) is complicated; machines can never be perfect (“every valve can fail to open, every fuse can blow”); only “man” (not the scientist or the intellectual) can think. In short, America will be back on an even keel when the simple virtues prevail.

The theme of conspiracy haunts the mind of the radical Rightist. It permits him to build up the image of the children of darkness

and the children of light. It exempts him from having to specify empirical proofs. General Edwin Walker told a Congressional committee that a "control apparatus" was "selling out the Constitution, national sovereignty and national independence," but when asked to specify the members of the control apparatus he replied that he could not name the individuals, but that the apparatus could be identified "by its effects—what it did in Cuba—what it did in the Congo—what it did in Korea." The irony of this reply is that it is cut from the same cloth as vulgar Bolshevik explanation: accident and contingency are ruled out of history, subjective intentions are the prattlings of "bourgeois morality," history is plot and objective consequence. Just as in a concentration camp—or any extreme situation—a victim adopts unconsciously the mode, manner, and even swagger of the aggressor, so men like General Walker seem to have become mesmerized by the enemies they have studied so assiduously and with such horrified fascination.

To round out their picture of horror, the radical Right has given us an exact forecast of things to come. Just as the "enthusiastic" preachers of Baptist fundamentalism would predict with Biblical certainty the date of the end of the world, so the fundamentalists of the radical Right make their own predictions of the end of liberty in the United States. Fred Schwarz, for example, has named 1973 as the date set by the Communists for the take-over of America. In his lectures, Schwarz builds up the picture of the ultimate fate in store for his audience once the Communists win. "When they come for you, as they have for many others, and on a dark night, in a dark cellar, they take a wide-bore revolver with a soft-nose bullet, and they place it at the nape of your neck . . ."

A more elaborate fantasy is provided in the *John Franklin Letters*, a Birchite novel that was circulated in 1959 and then withdrawn.² The novel pictures an America Sovietized by the Communists in 1970. The beginning of the end comes in 1963, when the World Health Organization sends in a Yugoslav inspector, under powers granted by the President of the United States, to search any house he chooses. The Yugoslav discovers in the house of a good

2. I am following here the account of Murray Kempton, in the *New York Post*, October 26, 1961.

American a file of anti-Communist magazines, seizes them as deleterious to the mental health of the community, and is shot by the American, who escapes to the woods. But the infiltration continues. By 1970, the United States, thanks to the global do-gooders, has become part of a World Authority dominated by the Soviet-Asian-African bloc, and this Authority suspends the country's right to govern itself because of the "historic psychological genocide" against the Negro race. United Nations administrators, mostly Red Chinese, are sent in to rule. Harlem, triumphant, arises and loots the liquor stores. The city proletariat, its sense of decency destroyed by public housing, begins to raid the suburbs. In short order, twenty million Americans are "done away with," while the people are subjected to torture by blow-torch and rock-n-roll—the latter on television.

Meanwhile, the good American begins to fight. As far back as 1967, John Franklin and his friends had been stockpiling rifles. And now they act. Franklin describes in gory detail a total of fourteen patriotic murders: two by fire, one by hammer, one by strangling, two by bow and arrow, one by defenestration, one by drowning, and the rest by shooting. These brave actions are sufficient to turn the tide—despite the atom bomb, a huge invasion army, and absolute terror. By 1976, the people all over the world go into the streets, and everywhere Communism falls. The assumption is that Communism is so inefficient it cannot build heavy tanks or heavy weapons. All that is necessary is the courage of a few determined men, practicing the "simple virtues," to overthrow this clumsy Moloch. As Murray Kempton remarks:

This, of course, is the Bircher's dream. America slides unresistingly into communism; a few Mike Hammers find their rifles; and in five years the world is free. The Birch mind is only the Mickey Spillaine mind. There is that lingering over and savoring of pure physical violence, the daydream of the disarmed. Reading *The John Franklin Letters* we can recognize Robert Welch's voice. He is Charles Atlas saying to us again that we need only mail the letter and back will come the muscles which we will use to throw the bully off the beach and have the girl turn to us with eyes shining with the sudden knowledge of how special we are.

III

The distinctive theme of the radical Right is not only that Communism is a more threatening force today than at any other time in the past forty years, but that the threat is as great *domestically* as it is externally. If one points out, in astonishment, that the American Communist Party is splintered badly, its membership at the lowest point since the mid-1920s, its influence in the trade unions nil, and that not one American intellectual figure of any consequence today is a Communist, the rightist replies do not confront these assertions at all. They range from the question of how, if this is so, it happened that the United States “lost” China, Czechoslovakia, and Cuba to the Communists, to General Walker’s charge that the highest officials of the Democratic Party are members of the “communist conspiracy,” or Robert Welch’s claim that former President Eisenhower was a “tool” of the Communists and that his brother Milton is an avowed one. Defeat can be possible in America only if sinister men are at the helm. Typical of this line is the question constantly reiterated by Reverend Billy Hargis: “How can you explain the mistakes of our leaders for the last thirty years if there aren’t Communists giving them advice?”

In fact, so great is the preoccupation with the alleged domestic threat that only rarely in the press of the radical Right is there any mention of Russia’s military prowess, its scientific equipment, or its ability to propel intercontinental ballistic missiles. When such facts are raised, it is often asserted either that such strength is a sham or that whatever knowledge Russia has was “stolen” from the United States. (This claim is made, for example, by Medford Evans, now an adviser to General Walker, in his book *The Secret War for the A-Bomb*, Chicago, Regnery Press, 1953.) For a considerable period of time the magazines of the radical Right refused to acknowledge that the Russians had sent a sputnik to the moon, or that they had sent a man into space, and, like the *Daily Worker* unmasking a capitalist conspiracy, they gleefully pounced on inconsistencies in news stories to assert that we were all being hoodwinked by a hoax (as were, presumably, the United States tracking stations).

The existence of an extreme *internal* threat is crucial to the

ideological, if not the psychological, posture of the radical Right. For if they admitted that such a threat is dubious, then the debate would have to shift to ground about which they have little comprehension, or they would have to admit—as Eisenhower did—that the area of maneuverability in foreign policy is highly limited. If the threat was conceded to be largely external, then one would have to support an expanded federal budget, large military expenditures, foreign aid to allies. And they would have to confront the intractable fact that American might alone is insufficient to defeat the Russians—or that victory for anyone would be possible once war began!—and that the United States has to take into account the forces working for independence in the former colonial world.

The unwillingness of the radical Right to recognize Russian military strength as a prime factor in the balance of terror, and the compulsive preoccupation with a presumed internal threat, can perhaps be clarified by a little-understood psychological mechanism—the need to create “fear-justifying” threats in order to explain fright that is provoked by other reasons. A child who is afraid of the dark may tell his parents that the creaking noises he hears in the house indicate that there are burglars downstairs. It does not reassure the child if he is told that there is no burglar, or that the noises are harmless, for he needs the story to justify the fear he already feels. In fact, it upsets the child to be so “reassured.” (The simplest answer is to tell the child that *if* there are burglars downstairs, his father is strong enough to handle them or that the police are close by.) An Indian study by Prasad a few years ago on rumors following an earthquake found that people in the areas adjacent to the earthquake, who had heard about the quake but had no direct experience of it, persisted in believing and spreading rumors that a *new* earthquake was coming. The function of such stories was to justify, psychologically, the *initial* apprehensions which had ambiguous basis in experience.³ In a similar sense the radical Right, having a diffused sense of fear, needs to find some story or explanation to explain or

3. For a technical elaboration of this psychological mechanism, see *A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance*, Leon Festinger. Row, Peterson, Chicago, 1957.

justify that fear. One can deny the external reality, and build up the internal threat, through such psychological mechanisms.

One sees among the radical Right, particularly among sections of its upper middle class following who have never seen a Communist, the most extraordinary apprehensions about the extent of current Communist infiltration in government. If asked to explain these attitudes one is constantly reminded of Alger Hiss and Harry Dexter White. Yet whatever the reality of past Communist infiltration in the government—and its actual influence has been highly distorted—none of this is any proof about the current status of Dean Rusk or W. W. Rostow, or any of the present foreign policy advisers of the Kennedy administration. Yet the *internal* threat is the one that is largely harped upon, along with the suspicions of the “soft” attitudes of the current administration.

It is largely among the extremist fringes of the radical Right that such paranoid views are peddled. But most of the radical Right, uneasily aware of the difficulty of maintaining the position that the Communist Party alone constitutes the internal threat, has shifted the argument to a different and more nebulous ground—the identification of communism with liberalism. “I equate growth of the welfare state,” says Dan Smoot (a former F.B.I. agent, whose program, *The Dan Smoot Report*, is heard on thirty-two television and fifty-two radio stations), “with socialism and socialism with communism.” Thus it is argued that the Administration is unwilling (for ideological reasons) or incapable (for intellectual reasons) of “getting tough” with Communism. And in this fashion, the foreign policy issue is tied in with a vast array of right-wing domestic issues, centering around the income tax and the welfare state.

But in so shifting the argument, the nature of the debate becomes clearer. What the right wing is fighting in the shadow of Communism is, essentially, “modernity”—that complex of attitudes which might be defined as the belief in rational assessment, rather than established custom, for the control of social change—and what it seeks to defend is its fading dominance, once exercised through the institutions of small-town America, over the control of social change. But it is precisely these established ways that a modernist America has been forced to call into question.

IV

Within the American consensus a meaningful polarity has always been part of the search for self-definition and self-identity: Jefferson versus Hamilton, Republicanism versus Federalism, Agrarianism versus Capitalism, the frontier West versus the industrial East. However significant such polarities may have been in the past, there seems to be little meaningful polarity today. There is no coherent conservative force⁴—someone like Walter Lippman, whose *The Public Philosophy* represents a genuine conservative voice, rejects the Right as it rejects him—and the Radical right is outside the political pale, insofar as it refuses to accept the American consensus. Nor does a viable Left exist in the United States today. The pacifist and socialist elements have been unable to make the peace issue salient. The radicals have been unable to develop a comprehensive critique of the social disparities in American life—the urban mess, the patch-work educational system, the lack of amenities in our culture. Among the liberals, only the exhaustion of the “received ideas,” such as they were, of the New Deal remains. It is a token of the emptiness of contemporary intellectual debate that from the viewpoint of the radical Right, the Americans for Democratic Action constitutes the “extreme left” of the American political spectrum, and that *Life*, in order to set up a fictitious balance, counterposes the tiny Council of Correspondence, a loosely organized peace group inspired by Erich Fromm and David Riesman, as the “extreme left,” to the “extreme right” of the John Birch Society.

The “politics of conflict” in any country inevitably has an emotional dimension, but in the United States, which has lacked an historically defined *doctrinal* basis for emotional divisions, the politics of conflict—when economic interest-group issues are muted—takes on a psychological dimension. In this psychological polarity, the Right has often been splenetic, while the mood of the Left has

4. The National Review, which proclaims itself conservative, is a strange mash of Thomistic natural law (Buckley), Manchester economic liberalism (Hazlitt and Buckley), Burkean traditionalism (Meyer and Buckley), Platonic *virtu* (Bozell and Buckley), Haushofer geo-politics (Burnham and Buckley), and single-tax, agrarian, libertarian individualism (Choderov and Buckley). A heady brew indeed.

traditionally been one of *ressentiment*. Today the politics of the radical Right is the politics of frustration—the sour impotence of those who find themselves unable to understand, let alone command, the complex mass society that is polity today, while only the Negro community is fired by the politics of resentment—and this resentment, based on a justified demand for equity, presents no psychological polarity to the radical Right. Insofar as there is no real Left to counterpose to the Right, the liberal has become the psychological target of that frustration.

One of the reasons why psychological politics can flare up so much more easily here than, say, in Great Britain is the essentially “populist” character of American institutions and the volatile role of public opinion. In the ill-defined, loosely articulated structure of American life, public opinion rather than law has been the operative sanction against non-conformists and dissenters. Though Americans often respond to a problem with the phrase “there ought to be a law,” their respect for law has been minimal, and during periods of extreme excitement, whether it be the vigilante action of a mob or the removal of a book from a school library, the punitive sanctions of opinion quickly supersede law. The very openness or egalitarianism of the American political system is predicated on the “right of the people to know,” and the Congressional committees, whether searching into the pricing policies of corporations or the political beliefs of individuals, have historically based their investigative claims on this populist premise.

It has always been easier to “mobilize” public opinion on legislation here than in England; and in the United States the masses of people have a more direct access to politics. In the elite structure of British politics, control is not in the constituencies (or, as here, among the hundreds of local political bosses who have to be dealt into the game), but in the small parliamentary caucuses which have a legal, as well as historic, independence from mass party control. The British elite, wedded to a “politics of civility,” tends to dampen any extremism within the top political structure, while the control system keeps the masses outside and makes it difficult for them to be mobilized for direct pressure on the government. The presidential election system—as against a ministerial system—with the candidates appealing to every voter and, if possible, shaking every hand, involves

a direct relation to the electorate. And in the Congressional system, individual constituents, through letters, telephone calls, or personal visits, can get through immediately to their representative to affect his vote. The Congressional system itself, with its elaborate scaffolding of Senatorial prerogative, often allows a maverick like Borah, Norris or Robert La Follette to dominate the floor, or a rogue elephant like Huey Long or Joe McCarthy to rampage against the operations of the government.

But while the populist character of our political institutions and the sweeping influence of public opinion allow social movements to flare with brush-fire suddenness across the political timberland, the unwieldy party system, as well as the checks and balances of the Presidential and judicial structures, also act to constrain such movements. In a few instances, notably the temperance crusade, a social movement operating outside the party system was able to enforce a unitary conception of social behavior on the country—and even then prohibition was repealed in two decades. Until recently, the party and Presidential system have exerted a “discipline of compromise” that has put the maverick and the rogue elephant outside the main arena of the political game.

Within this perspective, therefore, what are the prospects of the radical Right? To what extent does it constitute a threat to democratic politics in the United States? Some highly competent political observers have already written it off as a meaningful political movement. Richard Rovere has argued that the press treats the extreme Right as though it were a major tendency in American politics, and that certain politicians are as much obsessed with it as certain others are with the extreme Left. “If a day arrives when the extreme Right does become a major movement,” he writes “the press and the obsessed politicians may have a lot to answer for. For the time being, there seems no reason to suppose that its future holds anything more than its present. There is no evidence at all that the recent proliferation of radical, and in some cases downright subversive, organizations of a Rightist tendency reflects or has been accompanied by a spread of ultra-conservative views. On the contrary, what evidence there is suggests that the organizations are frantic efforts to prevent ultra-conservatism from dying out.”

In his immediate assessment, Rovere is undoubtedly right. In

the spring of 1962, both former Vice-President Nixon and Senator Goldwater had already dissociated themselves from the extremist right. Nixon repudiated the Birchites, on the premise that they were already a political liability. Goldwater, treading more cautiously, expressed his concern that, if not the Birchites, then their leader, Robert Welch, may have gone too far.

Yet the future, is more murky than Rovere suggests. It is in the very nature of an extremist movement, given its tensed posture and its need to maintain a fever pitch, to mobilize, to be on the move, to act. Lacking any sustained dramatic issue, it could quickly wear itself out, as McCarthyism did. To this extent therefore, the prospects of the radical Right depend considerably on the international situation. If Laos and all Vietnam were to fall to the Communists; if, within the Western Hemisphere, the moderate regimes of Bolivia and Venezuela were to topple and the Communists to take over—then the radical Right could begin to rally support around a drive for “immediate action,” for a declaration of war in these areas, for a pre-emptive strike, or similar axioms of a “hard line.” And since such conservatives as Nixon and Goldwater are committed, at least rhetorically, to a tough anti-Communist position, they would either be forced to go along with such an extreme policy or go under. If the international situation becomes stabilized, it is then likely that the radical Right may run quickly out of steam.

Yet the future is more murky than Rovere suggests. It is in the still presents in a very different and less immediate sense, a threat to American liberties. Democratic consensus as the sorry history of Europe has shown, is a fragile system, and if there is a lesson to be learned from the downfall of democratic government in Italy, Austria, and Germany, and from the deep divisions in France, it is that a crucial turning point comes, as Juan Linz pointed out, when extremist political parties or social movements can successfully establish “private armies” whose resort to violence—street fightings, bombings, the break-up of their opponents’ meetings, or simply intimidation—cannot be controlled by the elected authorities, and whose use of violence is justified or made legitimate by the respectable elements in society.

In America, the extreme-right groups of the late 1930s—the Coughlinites, the German-American Bund, the native fascist groups—all sought to promote violence, but they never obtained legitimate

or respectable support. The McCarthyite movement of the early 1950s, despite the rampaging antics of its eponymous leader, never dared go, at least rhetorically, outside the traditional framework in trying to establish loyalty and security tests. The Birchers, and the small but insidious group of "Minutemen," as the epitome of the radical Right, are willing to tear apart the fabric of American society in order to instate their goals; and they did receive a temporary aura of legitimacy on the Right.

Barbarous acts are rarely committed out of the blue. (As Freud says, first one commits oneself in words, and then in deeds.) Step by step, a society becomes accustomed to accept, with less and less moral outrage and with greater and greater indifference to legitimacy, the successive blows. What was uniquely disturbing about the emergence of the radical Right of the 1960s is the support it was able to find among traditional small-town leaders who have become conditioned by an indiscriminate anti-Communism equating any form of liberalism with Communism to judge as respectable a movement which, if successful, would only end the liberties they profess to cherish.

POEMS

SNAPSHOTS OF A DAUGHTER-IN-LAW

1. You, once a belle in Shreveport,
with henna-colored hair, skin like a peachbud,
still have your dresses copied from that time,
and play a Chopin prelude
called by Cortot: "*Delicious recollections
float like perfume through the memory.*"

Your mind now, mouldering like wedding-cake,
heavy with useless experience, rich
with suspicion, rumor, fantasy,
crumbling to pieces under the knife-edge
of mere fact. In the prime of your life.

Nervy, glowering, your daughter
wipes the teaspoons, grows another way.

2. Banging the coffee-pot into the sink
she hears the angels chiding, and looks out
past the raked gardens to the sloppy sky.
Only a week since They said: *Have no patience.*

The next time it was: *Be insatiable.*
Then: *Save yourself; others you cannot save.*
Sometimes she's let the tapstream scald her arm,
a match burn to her thumbnail,

or held her hand above the kettle's snout
right in the woolly steam. They are probably angels,
since nothing hurts her any more, except
each morning's grit blowing into her eyes.

3. Name me a thinking woman who has not slept with monsters.
The beak that grips her, she becomes. And Nature,
that sprung-lidded, still commodious
steamer-trunk of *tempora* and *mores*
gets stuffed with it all: the mildewed orange-flowers,
the female pills, the terrible breasts
of Boadicia beneath flat foxes' heads and orchids.

Two handsome women, gripped in argument,
each proud, acute, subtle, I hear scream
across the cutglass and majolica
like Furies cornered from their prey:
the argument *ad feminem*, all the old knives
that have rusted in my back, I drive in yours,
ma semblable, ma soeur!

4. Knowing themselves too well in one another;
their gifts no pure fruition, but a thorn,
the prick filed sharp against a hint of scorn . . .
Reading while waiting
for the iron to heat,
writing, "*This is the gnat that mangles men*"
in that Amherst pantry while the jellies boil and scum,
or, more often,
iron-eyed and beaked and purposed as a bird,
dusting everything on the whatnot every day of life.
5. *Dulce ridentem, dulce loquentem,*
she shaves her legs until they gleam
like petrified mammoth-tusk.

6. When to her lute Corinna sings
neither words nor music are her own;
only the long hair dipping
over her cheek, only the song
of silk against her knees . . .
and all these
adjusted in reflections of an eye.

Poised, trembling and unsatisfied, before
an unlocked door, that cage of cages,
tell us, you bird, you tragical machine—
is this *fertilisante douleur*? Pinned down
by love, for you the only natural action,
are you edged more keen
to prise the secrets of the vault? has Nature shown
her household books to you, daughter-in-law,
that her sons never saw?

7. “To have in this uncertain world some stay
which cannot be undermined, is
of the utmost consequence.”

Thus wrote
a woman, partly brave and partly good,
who fought with what she partly understood.
Few men about her would or could do more,
hence she was labelled harpy, shrew and whore.

8. “You all die at fifteen,” said Diderot,
and turn part legend, part convention.
Still, eyes inaccurately dream
behind closed windows blankening with steam.
Deliciously, all that we might have been,
all that we were—fire, tears,
wit, taste, martyred ambition—
stirs like the memory of refused adultery
the drained and flagging bosom of our middle years.

9. *Not that it is done well, but
that it is done at all?* Yes, think
of the odds! or shrug them off forever.
This luxury of the precocious child,
Time's precious chronic invalid,—
would we, darlings, resign it if we could?
Our blight has been our sinecure:
mere talent was enough for us—
glitter in fragments and rough drafts.

Sigh no more, ladies.

Time is male
and in his cups drinks to the fair.
Bemused by gallantry, we hear
our mediocrities over-praised
indolence read as abnegation
slattern thought styled intuition
every lapse forgiven, our crime
only to cast too bold a shadow
or smash the mould straight off.

For that, solitary confinement,
teargas, attrition shelling.
Few applicants for that honor.

10. Well,
she's long about her coming, who must be
more merciless to herself than history.
Her mind full to the wind, I see her plunge
breasted and glancing through the currents,
taking the light upon her
at least as beautiful as any boy
or helicopter,
poised, still coming,
her fine blades making the air wince
but her cargo

no promise then:
delivered
palpable
ours.

Adrienne Rich

TWO DREAM SONGS

'THE PRISONER OF SHARK ISLAND' WITH PAUL MUNI

Henry is old, old; for Henry remembers
Mr. Deeds' tuba, & the Cameo,
& the race in *Ben Hur*,—*The Lost World*, with sound,
& *The Man from Blankley's*, which he did not dig,
nor did he understand one caption of,
bewildered Henry, while the Big Ones laught.

Now Henry is unmistakably a Big One.
Funnee; he don't feel so.
He just stuck around.
The German & the Russian films into
Italian & Japanese films turned, while many
were prevented from making it.

He wishing he could squirm again where Hoot
is just ahead of rustlers, where William S
forgoes some deep advantage, & moves on,
where Hashknife Hartley having the matter taped
the rats are flying. For the rats
have moved in, mostly, and this is for real.

SILENT SONG

Bright-eyed & bushy-tailed woke not Henry up.
Bright though upon his workshop shone a vise
central, moved in
while he was doing time down hospital
and growing wise.
He gave it the worst look he had left.

Alone. They all abandoned Henry—wonder! all,
when most he—under the sun.
That was all right.
He can't work well with it here, or think.
A bilocation, yellow like catastrophe.
The name of this was freedom.

Will Henry again ever be on the lookout for women & milk,
honour & love again,
have a buck or three?
He felt like shrieking but he shuddered as
(spring mist, warm, rain) an handful with quietness
vanisht & the thing took hold.

John Berryman

HIPPOLYTUS: POLAND, 1960

Dan le trouble où je suis je ne puis rien pour moi.—Phèdre

Sometimes in front of the deceptive landscape
Someone strolls and pauses, a boy no longer,
Do I recognize the unhandsome stranger,
Once he has spoken?

He who just last year led the schools of children
On the brave new heights and along the river
With the fragile voice that is now forever
Altered and broken:

On the surface much as he was before the
Dream that brought so many defilements waking
And at which his world became queer and shocking,
In nothing changed much

Save the way he lives and the dread he lives in
Of the heart that knows and the secret words that
Fearful he must listen to, yes, and look at,
Sickening must touch,

Flocking thick winged instruments that at bedtime
Force him to behold the vagina's pink shell
Falsely close and falsely reopen, as well
As the mock penis—

Surely this is not what he prays to nightly?
No more ought he trust his daylight companions,
Uncouth, dull, coarse, idle, delinquent these ones,
Cupid and Venus.

How he wears his youth's unbecoming belted
Jacket, round his shoulders the armour of age,
Squeezing in his palm a small pen knife whose edge
He fingers often.

Now his eyes are full of a tasteless hunger
And his features heavy with resignation,
Set on lip, cheek, brow is the abstract passion
Love cannot soften,

Staring out from windows where death is pregnant
Under damp curls strung on a rotting forehead
Breathing through his mouth like the fish, cold blooded,
That in the flood stand

As he floats himself over grief and knowledge
After childhood's wrongs have been known, forgiven,
Undiscovered still are the ways to live in
Puberty's wasteland.

Window speaks to window as shade to shadow
Thus, 'Our blinds are drawn and our summer selves dead,
Elsewhere windows twinkle their lights abroad
Long after sundown.

'Is it all too true what we wished for fondly,
This the very thing that we thought we wanted?
There is no way out, what we prayed is granted
Suddenly full grown.

'Shelter have we none, hence our broken shutters,
Tempests blow like kisses through empty spaces,
Weeping North West winds to their salt embraces
Beg us to open,

'So the days are equal that soon will shorten
To the equal nights, and the nights grow longer,
Venus' waiting room and the willing stranger,
What should we hope then?'

'Open wide your arms wherein darkness lightens,
O your eyes alone may distract these shadows,
There is no respite from the talking shadows
Save in your silence.'

Somewhere winter forms, be it Spring or Autumn,
Through the long cold stop, through the frozen meanwhile
There is no escape for the young but exile
Cunning and silence.

Daryl Hine

David T. Bazelon

A NEW KIND OF WAR

What is mostly wrong with current popular thinking on the nuclear confrontation is that almost everyone feels a responsibility to take an *official* position immediately, before having thought through the awful problem. As an example of this, note that threatening to push the button and actually pushing it are two quite different acts. The threat may achieve something in relation to the Soviet Union, and also may keep it from achieving certain of its ends which we properly oppose. Pushing the button will achieve nothing for anyone. The moment it is pushed, everything we are struggling for in the world will be lost, and domestically we will be transformed into the most disaster-oriented military dictatorship anyone has ever imagined. There very likely will be no government at all at that point, and any government there may be will operate by machine-gun.

Most of us in America believe we would never push it first. Assume the Russians for one reason or another had done so: there would be no point in our responding in kind at that time, except as an act of monumental pique. But if this sort of thing is discussed, most of us feel that the Russians might then consider pushing the button first—just because we dared to mention it. So it is not discussed.

The human race has a long way to go before it can even conceive life—I mean the resolution of serious conflict—without a resort to ultimate force. But it is demonstrable today that the resort to ultimate force is an act of suicide. In this sense, the essential politics of our day cannot be understood apart from the psychology of suicide,

EDITOR'S NOTE: *This article is part of PR's discussion on the problems of the cold war and the future of the West. Comment is invited.*

which nicely indicates the extremity and the originality of our circumstances. We are deeply and disastrously involved in this weird event, the "cold war." I want here to discuss war aims and consequences, because in this "war", three billion individual lives, civilization, and for all we know the actual continuation of life on the planet, are at stake.

I submit that a war of this kind cannot be fought, and should not be threatened, for merely national interests. If Russia and the United States were identical in their social systems, the cold war would be pointless—and our reasons for engaging in it compounded of ignorance and suicidal need. So we must be very clear and candid about the particular differences between Russia and the United States for which we risk the future of the human race on this planet. As a corollary proposition, we must own up to the existing and potential similarities between the two great power blocs.

We must first know exactly why we are engaged in a struggle with the Soviet Union, and then we must devise limitless means of pursuing our aims in this struggle short of engaging in, or over-risking, the nuclear holocaust.

To rephrase the proposition: there is no conceivable justification for engaging in this deadly struggle other than the preservation of superior elements in our social organization. None of these elements can be furthered or preserved by nuclear war. *The new end therefore suggests the new means.* The Soviet-American confrontation is a struggle of social competition and it is not fought militarily. The most that can be achieved by armament is a standoff—and this is significant only as it affords *time*, to be used to fight the war of total social competition.

The Communists have challenged us to a war for the planet, and whether we accept the challenge or not, the planet will be unrecognizably altered in 50 years. If we do not fight a new kind of war, this great transformation will be carried out increasingly under Soviet auspices. Unfortunately, we cannot engage in this contest as we did in the Second World War, as a battle of armament production. We have experience in that, it suits us politically, and we were an unqualified success at it in the early forties. (The year before the war ended, American armament production accounted for nearly forty-five per cent of all such production of all belligerent nations, Allied and Axis.) What is required now is quite similar in wealth-effort to what was required then—full use of our industrial capacity, and free delivery of the product thereof. *But not ships, planes, tanks, and bombs.* And that poses the deep political difficulty. We are called upon to give away useful material instead of destructive hardware. Can we manage the problem politically?

Perhaps our great defeat to date in the cold war has been our failure to see how multiform it was becoming, and that it must eventually become total, encompassing all imaginable forms of competition, from medical care to mighty rockets, from Taiwan to the South Pole, and beyond this planet altogether a quarter of a million miles to the moon.

In America, the cold war has been widely misunderstood to consist primarily of the balance of nuclear terror, and something called "propaganda"—which need not be taken seriously because it is "just words." The early debate in this country concerning our inadequacy in the cold war was carried on mostly in terms of budgeteering over conventional armament and scientific research. This narrow perspective, in conjunction with self-exhilarating noises about "liberation" of Eastern Europe and "massive retaliation" as the noblest form of suicide, have been our substitutes for policy and realistic conception since Korea.

Any real policy must begin with the proposition that nuclear war shall be considered an impossibility. The contrary proposition is not policy at all, but literal madness. Even assuming that after such a war the planet and part of the civilization on it continued, what would have been achieved? It is not even clear that there could be a "winner" in the sense of one of the great powers surviving in a position to dictate the terms of the reconstruction—or even to participate in it effectively. Could such a war be fought for "freedom"? If there are no other ways to fight for freedom, then probably it is a lost cause.

Unfortunately, it is not a belaboring of the obvious to reiterate the underlying assumptions of the stalemate of annihilation in which we are caught and which so many of us call the cold war. A Congressional report estimated sudden death to fifty million Americans in a surprise nuclear attack, and serious injury to an additional twenty million. Our own department of annihilation has assured us all along that a lot of Russians would accompany us to the other side. And what if, somehow, there were more than one attack? If the war lasts longer than half an hour? This image of destruction is real. It must be accepted as a primary structural fact in any conception of our new world—the permanent background of everything that men hereafter do or fail to do on the stage of history.

Our understanding of history is, from this moment, totally rewritten. The future has arrived.

The present balance of power consists of a mutual exchange of homicide-plus-suicide threats. The threat is indispensable, the war is impossible. So we are faced with the reality of impossible alternatives.

Moreover, it is too early for unilateral surrender on either side, and probably inadvisable in any event. What would be surrendered would be the power and the right to participate in the governing and developing of the planet. Neither side is really capable of doing this alone; and to encourage a dictatorship of the world by an incompetent power seems eminently to be avoided. So also is a nuclear holocaust.

In the present balance of impossibilities, there has been brought into effect an implied anti-suicide pact. Delicate and tentative, this is nevertheless the true power-foundation of the coming world government. It is fundamentally an alliance between Russia and the United States; it is obviously the most important alliance in world politics; and like all alliances, it is inevitably directed against non-parties. Thus the nature of war has been turned inside out, so that it now *begins* with an agreement between the warring parties, and is carried forward on two complementary fronts: in any and all non-military areas; and by strengthening and extending the agreement which marked the onset of hostilities. In other words, modern war consists entirely of a long, hard process of *phased surrender*. So disarmament, for example, is not properly conceived as an end to the war, but rather as a particular—and very important—theatre of combat. Success in this theatre would mean a significant deepening of the war-agreement, achievement of further substantial surrender, and of course an increased assertion of the power of the alliance against non-parties.

All of which adds up to “negotiation”—difficult, complex, unending. We must negotiate, or accept the impossible alternatives of nuclear war or unilateral surrender. And the basis of negotiation—all negotiation, any negotiation—is *the definition of reality in terms of power or commitment*, with an implied understanding that each party to the negotiation will face up to agreed-upon reality. Before we get to the question of power, what commitment do we share with the Russians? Let's be safe and assume none, until proven—except the commitment to avoid self-destruction, because that is already proven. For commitment, read morality—which is significant in conflict-situations in the real world only to the extent that it is actually shared. And one is never sure. All morality requires taking a chance. To take a chance is to take a chance, and no cheap satisfactions of indignation or righteous superiority are to be contemplated. So much for shared commitment as a basis for negotiation: it is the *end* of the process, not its beginning.

Now power. Power as a basis of negotiation refers necessarily to existing power. Most frequently, parties cannot negotiate about future power; what they ordinarily do is wait until the future has arrived,

and then sit down to negotiate about their mutual understanding of it. During this hiatus, they go out into the field and create realities—as a basis for future negotiation. This is the pattern of the next fifty years.

The United States and the Soviet Union can afford only limited tests of strength. That is the big difference between their negotiations and traditional negotiations among other parties. The new war is a largely symbolic struggle for superiority without the advantage of any actual, sure tests of strength which might facilitate the course of negotiations.

What will be negotiated? Everything—the whole planet. Berlin, the Middle East, Southeast Asia, Formosa, and eventually India, Africa, South America, as well as scores of intermediate situations. The U.S. and the Soviet Union will negotiate about all possible matters as they mature for negotiation or are matured by one power or another for purposes of negotiation. And remember—one cannot negotiate on the basis of morality, on the basis that I am right and you are wrong. That is a way of stating a proposition, not of negotiating about it. One negotiates exactly because one cannot dictate and cannot wait: *because the unilateral proposition is inadequate*. Russia and America will negotiate so long as and to the extent that this is true of each. In certain essential matters, it is true of each now.

Negotiation is not preaching, it is not propaganda, and it is not the direct expression of power. It is the creation of a universe of discourse in which a common reality can be defined. It does not involve a universe of moral discourse unless there are existing shared moral factors in the reality being defined and discussed. (Which suggests a neglected opportunity: where it will not cost us the world, we might take a few chances and offer them the option of responding in kind to our voluntarily taken moral position; that is, act as witnesses to our own morality and thus invite them down the same chancey path. This is a moral position in addition to the usual table-thumping.)

The dominant popular *idée fixe* about “negotiation” is that it’s practically treasonous even to contemplate doing it except from what has been called a “position of strength.” Unfortunately, there will never be enough of these to go around. No, one negotiates without the absolute certainty of victory—the same way all games are played. While negotiating, however, one certainly bends all effort toward preserving and expanding positions of strength. (The second most unfortunate popular idea about our fateful negotiations is that only military positions of strength are taken to be such; this is just a corollary error generally accompanying the military illusion.)

The net result of the fifty-year negotiations will be a *Line*—a gerymandered Line drawn around the globe. In places it will be stark and absolute, elsewhere it will subtly waver and flicker. There will be jockeying for influence and position, then negotiating sessions, occasional firing, more deal-talk—and out of all this finally a Line drawn wherever one needs to be drawn, and drawn with as much definition as may be needed.

What else could this coming negotiation come to? Whether or not the raw areas of the world are necessarily a power vacuum, they certainly are such as long as the Communists are expanding aggressively. It would be silly to think that we can “negotiate” about their ceasing to be imperialist, about their becoming “good” nations. That is preaching or dictating, not negotiating. America, even all the West, has the power only to negotiate, and to create favored positions from which and about which to negotiate—we do not have the power to dictate. And we cannot fight. Neither can they.

What does it mean to compete, and what is the comparative nature of the competitors? Apparently one of the nice things about this great new competition is that, like charity, it begins at home. The question, *How good are you?* seems to be the big bomb in the new non-military war for the world. This *could* become the most worthwhile form of warfare ever devised.

Both countries are equally committed to industrial production as a way of life. From this one complex of fact, profound similarities follow. When two such industrial organizations compete, even profounder similarities are due to develop as the competition continues. There are not that many different ways to make steel or generate electricity. When a steel mill is built in India, the Indians must adapt themselves to steel-making. The other way around, you simply get inefficient steel-making, which is a waste of time. If we have a superior steel mill, the Russians will copy it; if they develop a superior rocket design or means of propulsion, we will have to imitate them.

There are, however, significant social differences in the organization of production. When men go into a steel mill, they are not free to treat it like an amusement park; but they do not all have to wear exactly the same clothing or think exactly the same thoughts. They must be so organized socially as to be capable of producing steel efficiently. That's all. (Unless they produce so much so easily that they are then free to concentrate on nonsense like paper-position, as in America today.)

The chief purpose of the Russian manager is to produce goods. That is *not* the purpose of the American manager, who is charged with tending a balance-sheet rather than meeting quotas of production. The self-interest of the manager in Russia is clearly tied to this purpose: the Russian receives bonuses for exceeding his quota. In *The Red Executive*, David Granick says: "The Soviets have adopted the concept that earnings should be tied closely and immediately to production. For workers, the piece-rate system of payment reigns supreme. For managers, monthly bonuses make up a major part of income. . . ." The American, on the other hand, increases his income when the balance-sheet is properly tended. This is the most important difference between the two systems—remembering, of course, that Russian industry is far behind ours, and they have never been forced to deal with the problem of surplus. It is just barely possible that there is something about the preservation of power against the onslaught of surplus which would lead the Communist Party bureaucrats to sabotage the production of a mature industry (to preserve their unnecessary power) just as the American paper-manipulators have done. But this we will not know until the Russians are faced with the problem.

The emphasis on production is experienced by the Russian manager as soon as he begins to work. He typically has plant experience. But the American manager may be a financial or administrative man from the very beginning and never even get a good solid look at the inside of a factory. Almost all of the Russian managers have engineering degrees, even though they end up doing administrative work which would be handled in the United States by a lawyer or a business school graduate.

In America, the control factor lies in the financial-business part of the organization, not in production itself. In Russia, it is clearly and simply the Communist Party, which begins to have its effect in the shop and is omnipresent as a control factor from the bottom level all the way up to the Presidium. The human relations curriculum in American business schools is supplied, in Russia, by practical activity in the Communist Party, which the Russian managers experience while getting their engineering degrees. The elite quality of Russian management is thus secured: "While management is recruited almost completely from Party ranks, only some four per cent of the total population are Party members." In America, the elite is selected through money-background and educational status.

The two main things about America are that it is a very big country and, unlike Russia which is also a very big country, never had

a strong central authority. This tradition of central authority in the one, and the contrary tradition in the other, is very likely the essence of the two responses to technology. But the effort at centralization in Russia (according to Alexander Gerschenkron) is frequently ineffective: "The fundamental ignorance of the central authorities restricts their ability to enforce their will. Obversely, it is the knowledge of the manager that assures for him his area of freedom." In other words, there is something like the decentralization of our "markets" in Russia not because of the absence of central authority, but because of its limited effectiveness.

The Soviet manager operates more independently and is much freer in fact than is allowed for by the theory or the Plan within which he functions. For example, Gerschenkron asserts that managerial disobedience is *required* to fulfill the Plan. But he says this cannot be recognized openly because to do so would contradict the posture of the dictatorship.

Recent reforms in Russia have amounted to legal recognition of the enlarged scope of managerial discretion. In 1957, central control was modified and partly abolished, and a very significant decentralization of planning and administrative authority was brought about. Gerschenkron believes there is a characteristic cyclical swing to and away from central control in Russia. I wonder whether there is any connection between this movement and our business cycle? With the difference, of course, that ours would be the inverse of theirs—it is only after the excesses of decentralization have occurred here that the central authority is called upon to patch up the picture.

The industrial differences between the United States and Russia are not limited to "Planned" on one side and "Markets" on the other. We both plan, and we both plan badly: they from too much centralization, we from too little. In America, major industry is planned—markets are internalized and dealt with administratively—but these plans are autonomous for the particular company (which is often enough a financial rather than a production unit) and the purpose of the plan is quite frequently to curtail production rather than to administer the full use of available technology. In Russia, on the other hand, there is also considerable factory autonomy—that is, effort directed toward self-preservation of the unit, which undoubtedly also operates to achieve less than the fullest production.

We can assume that there is considerable waste in the form of misuse and under-use of productive capacity in Russia. (This may be identified as the issue of "negative" competition.) For a particular

period, Russian waste may or may not equal American waste—but it is of a different kind. For example, Khrushchev himself has complained (it is apparently a very big problem) that parts of a new enterprise will be completed before other elements—a plant may be built, and the machinery not delivered, or vice versa—so that considerable capital investment may stand idle for a long period. These Russian difficulties are just not, however, the same thing as American under-utilization in steel capacity, year after year after year. In the Soviet-American confrontation, therefore, these elements of Russian waste are only a *temporary* advantage to the Americans.

There is a substantial amount of featherbedding in American industry—sponsored by both management and the unions, in the front office and in the plant. The so-called profit motive here too often leads us to produce at much less than capacity, or to produce nonsense, or not to produce at all. As J. K. Galbraith has stated it:

Our peacetime concern for production . . . is selective and traditional. As a result . . . our total output and its rate of increase are only a small part of what it might be, perhaps indeed only a minor fraction.

The competition with the Soviets cannot be carried on in terms of the money value of production—it is not a statistical game played with Gross National Product figures. GNP includes the billions we spend on cosmetics, on refrigerators that don't frost up and do make ice-cubes automatically, and tens of thousands of other such things. In the new kind of war it may be significant that we are a nation on wheels and the Russians are not; but our industrial effort toward planned obsolescence of our automobiles is hardly a sign of our superiority. It is built-in waste, like the waste resulting from bureaucracy which we assume about Russia. And waste equals waste. We cannot depend upon *their* waste to lend *us* superiority. We know that our own waste results from Madison Avenue's forced feeding of the nation along with our huge unused productive capacity—from an excessive emphasis on profitable consumer goods and a paucity of "unprofitable" state services like education, research, urban renewal, and so on.

Soviet economic competition has been the subject of an investigation of the Joint Economic Committee; hearings were held and papers submitted late in 1959. Walt W. Rostow, an economic historian from MIT who has become an important White House advisor, submitted a really exceptional paper in which he summed up the contributions of all the panelists by saying:

Our dangers do not lie primarily in the size of the Soviet economy or its overall rate of growth. Our dangers lie in a particular allocation of Soviet resources; in particular Soviet policies; in the way we Americans now conceive of our problems on the world scene; and, consequently, in the way we allocate our resources, human and material. . . . The professional Soviet literature on 'catching up' with the United States suggests the objective in the next decade is to equal or surpass American production in certain key sectors related to military potential (e.g., steel) rather than to exceed American levels of GNP. . . .

The simple significance of the Sputnik episode was that in utter disregard of our statistical-to-1975 advantage in production, the Soviets outdistanced us decisively in the most advanced scientific-industrial area. They accomplished this with half our GNP—by means of superior organization and the concentration of resources to an end. There is no reason why they cannot do this again. Russia is still a poor country compared to us, but they are increasingly able to surpass us in crucial areas. It should be recalled that they accomplished the same result before Sputnik by equalling our armament on half our GNP. So whatever theories we may hold about the superiority of market decisions over bureaucratic ukase, we must admit the facts in front of us—that not all bureaucratic decisions are wrong or incompetent.

We used to think of our productive capacity—whether used, unused or misused—as the source of our great power. With a little time for conversion, GM will produce thousands of tanks, Ford will fill the air with thousands of American aircraft, the steel mills will turn out the steel for millions of tons of shipping, and so on. Yes, but there won't be any time, this time. Or more properly, the time is now—and the products are not tanks, planes, and ships. *The products are everything we can use to make ourselves superior to the Russians, and everything the world can use to be induced to follow us instead of them.* Apart from maintaining the military stand-off, that is all that our superior industrial capacity can mean in the new context.

For example, it is not enough that we *could* create a scientific establishment equal or superior to the Russians. They have it and we don't. There is only one cure for that—create it. Not tanks and planes, but schools. Not Liberty ships, but laboratories. Otherwise, we lose the war—just as surely as we would have lost the war against Germany and Japan if we had not stopped making cars and refrigerators and started producing war material. (And the corporations dragged their feet at the beginning of that war, too.)

Although the critical awareness is growing, not everyone who should really understand the true nature of the competitive situation. A few years ago, *Fortune* concluded a survey of executive opinion on crucial issues of the day with this awesome statement: "Only one executive voiced concern over 'the real possibility of conflict with the USSR.' Only one declared he was worried over 'Communist world domination.'" At about the same time, speaking of the power and achievements of Russian technology at a conference held shortly after Sputnik, Professor Jerome Wiesner said: "When I really feel gloomy I think that five years from now they will be obviously superior to us in every area. But when I am optimistic I feel it will take ten years for them to achieve this position."

One of the problems encountered in comparing the two economies is the necessity of using Soviet statistics. But we can bypass this difficulty by relying on the public statements of Alan W. Dulles—statements issued when he was C.I.A. head. I think it is self-evident that he is not to be doubted on the upside.

In the spring of 1959, Mr. Dulles delivered an extremely important and revealing speech—but its sting and import were somewhat lost because it was headlined as a counter-statement to Khrushchev's boast that the Soviets would equal our production by 1970. Mr. Dulles said they wouldn't. He expressed the opinion that, beginning with forty per cent of our production in 1959, the Soviet Union might achieve sixty per cent of U.S. production by 1970. But he added: "By 1965 Soviet output of some basic raw materials and some industrial products will be approaching, and in a few cases exceeding, that of the United States. Most prominently, these products will be the kind that are needed for industrialization in the less developed countries."

As for ratio of growth, Mr. Dulles said that in the seven years through 1958 "Soviet industry has grown at the annual rate of nine and one-half per cent"—which is the C.I.A.'s "reconstruction and deflation of Soviet data." This rate was three times ours during the period, and he asserted clearly that if our rate of growth remains that low—between two per cent and three per cent a year—"the United States will be virtually committing economic suicide." This statement was made by the head of our secret intelligence agency: it may well be looked back upon one day as the great turning point in the thinking of our elite groups. Mr. Dulles, incidentally, did not rely on GNP figures without a breakdown: one of his examples in comparing the two economies was to point out that "while the Soviets last year were pro-

ducing only one automobile for every fifty we produced, they were turning out four machine tools to our one."

Professor Rostow has noted two contributing factors to the high rate of Soviet growth which may *not* be expected to continue into the future: (1) they must begin to devote more resources to replace used up facilities—this becomes more expensive the more facilities an industrial nation has; and (2) any country begins its industrial advance with a large pool of existing technology, and naturally when this has been applied its technological increment is merely annual and much harder earned.

We may take whatever "satisfaction" we can and will from considerations such as these. But they will not be decisive. Of infinitely greater concern must be the more profound factors, like automation. An item in the Communist Party's draft program issued in 1961 concerned the building of huge automated steel plants. These are technologically feasible. (Notice also that unlike the American steel industry they will "use up" existing steel plants rather than ignore them as they create the new, more modern facilities. They are not afraid of steel. It is not "inventory" to them, as it is in the paper economy.) In December, 1960, a panel of think-factory mathematicians issued a report that the Russians were mounting "an all-out scientific program in the field of automatic control," and suggested that "it is unwise to assume that they will not be successful." Clearly so: the problem with automation is that it is too productive—a real problem for us, a blessing for them. *Automation is Russia's secret weapon.*

Along this line of productive growth, Rostow notes that a six per cent rate of increase in Soviet GNP puts \$12 billion annually at the disposal of the Soviet government, while a three per cent rate of American growth puts only some \$15 billion at the disposal of our whole economy. There is no reason, for example, that the Soviet Union could not determine that in one year the entire increment would be devoted to foreign aid. Technically, we could devote our entire shortfall of production (percentage of unused capacity) to foreign aid—something on the magnitude of \$60 billion in one year—but our political and social machinery for accomplishing this is so old-fashioned that it would produce a major convulsion: it could not be had without a declaration of war of some kind.

Raymond Vernon of the Harvard Business School says: "The Soviet bloc enters the development field with one resounding advantage over the United States . . . that all its capital and all its technology are effectively at the government's command." Meanwhile, American

direct private investment abroad goes overwhelmingly to Canada, Western Europe, and some oil and mineral countries in South America, especially Venezuela. The character of our capital outflow has the effect of extending the period of primitive accumulation in the underdeveloped world—and opening the door for Soviet penetration through more direct and useful offerings.

The baronial structure of American business, along with the system of dual government in which the Federal power is always at last less than adequate, is our great weakness in competing with the Soviets in the newly avid areas. Uncoerced, how much institutional and profit interest is a big corporation operating in a foreign nation prepared to sacrifice to the national interest? Just about none—unless the Federal government underwrites the whole endeavor, which means the corporation looks to Washington instead of, say, the Indonesian masses for its profit. It is indicative of the *domestic* character of our crisis that American industry will have to learn how to work more efficiently with itself and with the government in order to accomplish effective competitive export of technology—and in so doing may even learn how to do the same thing back home. Wouldn't that be nice?

While there are obvious political differences between the two countries, the basic social power in each has much in common: it lies in the managerial control of the economy. The managerial class in Russia, whether in or out of the Communist Party, has considerable independent significance. The social power of the American managers is not to be doubted. They have had less official political power than their Russian counterparts chiefly because they still believe in absolute limitations on the role of the state.

Of course we much prefer our awareness of the differences between ourselves and the Russians. So the striking similarities flowing from the commitment to managerialism are little remarked, and in both Russia and America managerial power is justified by irrelevant notions of property. In Russia they say the people own everything through the state, and here they say the people own everything through the private corporation. In each case, the ownership of the people is merely technical and in fact they own nothing because they control nothing.

We have too high an opinion of ourselves, and too low an opinion of our enemies, just as if this were an old-style national conflict. But the cold war is not a conventional contest fought over national boundaries—or, in fact, from behind national boundaries. It is total social

war, and the total citizenry is involved not only because it may be destroyed by nuclear bombs, but because the means and the end of the war are social and political control over the great bureaucracies which are an ineradicable part of the new technological world. This means some measure of control over the managers. Properly conceiving this war, our greatest failure in it has been that we have developed no techniques for calling our *own* managers to account to us, the democratic polity, for their stewardship of the economy. The corporate managers in America are as little willing to engage in politics—in ideological argument and factual justification before a public—as are the Russian managers. The method of suppression is different, but the results are exasperatingly similar.

The only good reason for our struggle with Russia is that we do not want the profound defeats of the Russian people vis-à-vis their managers to become a pattern for world development. Here in America, we have suffered fewer defeats (we have joined fewer battles) but we have not met the final issues of the integration of the great bureaucracies with state power.

The differences between managerialism in Russia and America lie in the fact that we are not yet completely bureaucratized, and in the means of control of the population by the bureaucracies and of the bureaucracies by their ruling figures. Simply, the Russians utilize varying degrees of terror. But the terror in Russia is required mainly because the people there do not yet have our standard of living. It goes with the primitive accumulation of capital, which is a horror for the mass of the people whether or not accompanied by totalitarian state rule; as Engels described it, the effects were shockingly brutal in nineteenth century England. The Russian model is primitive accumulation by bureaucratic means, backed up by terror. But if one compares nineteenth century Britain with twentieth century Russia, the sharpest difference will be in the cultural quality and style of life, freedom or lack of it, of the two ruling and privileged groups, not in the condition of the masses. If Russian industrialization has been worse for the masses, this is probably because it has been bigger and quicker, rather than inherently more "evil."

The mass productive society achieves its most profound effects with or without terror. In American organizations we have a bureaucratic conformism which often seems like "voluntary" totalitarianism. It is voluntary in the sense that no organized, extra-legal police terror has induced it, and totalitarian in the sense that so many aspects of personal and spiritual life are "controlled" or relevant to social rule

—from opinions to ways of living. This would seem to result more from the stark bigness of industrial organizations than from terror and wrong ideology. It suggests that terror in Russia has a *special* role, and that there are underlying similarities between the two countries which have to do with factors more basic than political ideology and historical accidents.

But of course important differences remain. The difficult thing is to figure out which ones are temporary—no managerial ruling class is as yet fully consolidated—and which are to be more long-lived. To work the Russian-English analogy again: no matter how one feels about the Victorian hypocrisy of the English rulers, the Moscow Trials were a unique event in history. The technique of falsification, like technique in so many other fields, has become historically incomparable in our day.

The issue is not merely organization and the controlled direction of production, because that is inevitable; the issue for the world is planned democratic control, or Soviet-type bureaucratic-terror control. Since the purpose of the new war is to preserve the freedom inherent in a democratic system, the time to fight for democratic planning is now and the place is here.

We lose if we don't organize, and we lose if we don't organize on democratic lines. The struggle against totalitarianism is not a simple we-they combat. It is, most profoundly, a struggle against the conditions of modern life—ours as well as theirs. The war begins at home.

For the ordinary person in both Russia and America, the main thing in life is a job for an economic organization so big he doesn't know where it begins or ends, which he controls by mass political action or not at all. George Orwell's *1984* was not merely an image of the future Soviet society. It was a nightmare common to all men in bureaucratized societies. We understood it, and it became a common image, because it touched fears that had been generated by our own experience—not because it finally “explained” Communism to us. The nightmare flows over into daylight reality wherever there is conformity to the great impersonality, and whether or not this conformity is induced by terror. Terror is only organized fear: there is a great deal of fear in America, some of it organized and more of it still unorganized.

The difficult problem is to relate managerial control to state power in each nation; but on the run, so to speak, since Russia is excessive and we are immature in the use of state power. And the situation remains fluid. When you talk about the state in Russia, you are talking

about everything. In America, to view the power system comparably, you would have to talk about the state *and* corporate and other property-power over the economic machine. We are freer than the Russians to the extent that our two-party system actually functions to allow democratic control over the state. We are not freer than they when we lack democratic control (either directly or through the intermediary of the state) over the economic power centers. On balance, we are much freer, and naturally we are nicer people. But we are also weaker, we have not yet engaged fully in the coming struggle for a higher level of organization. It is the quantum of freedom achieved at that higher level that is decisive, not the freedom enjoyed by virtue of lack of organization, because the latter is not durable.

Not since the feudal barons seized and held property by their own force has there been perfect privacy of property. The bourgeois system and the national state were concurrent developments, and necessarily so; the national state was required in order to make bourgeois property tenure feasible, to allow markets to happen, and to ensure the free exploitation of labor. The state also presided over the seizure of natural resources. All this indicates the central role of the state even under genuinely free-enterprise capitalism. The whole point about the state is that its role in our economy is and must be greater by far—in kind, not merely degree—than it was even when the continent was given away.

Now if, in order to fight this new kind of war, we have to abandon certain features of capitalist property or free enterprise ideology, then we either do so or we lose. The Second World War could not have been fought without price controls, material priorities, and the more or less gently forced cooperation of capital and labor. To the extent that the “free enterprise” system insists that there shall be no interference with its blessed workings, then it is still one of the more dangerous myths loose in the world. On that basis, we would have lost World War II. On that basis, we might as well give up now—Russia will walk all over us.

The unwritten rule in current American discourse that no comparisons of similarity may be indulged—that the existence of democracy here and totalitarianism there prescribes only black-and-white appraisals—is an intolerable intellectual condition for us. *We cannot save the difference unless we define it precisely.* The beginning is to admit that our democracy is not perfect, and neither is their totalitarianism. There are profound forces at work on both of us that start outside, go deeper,

and will end up going beyond, either political system. We should recognize these social-historical similarities *exactly because* we value and want to preserve the political differences. Moreover, the chief *cultural* difference is just that we can be more honest about the whole thing. Perhaps most important, real probing would bring us within talking distance of the rest of the world, which is genuinely interested in this vital comparison.

In the course of the competition we are bound to become more like them, where they are better or more powerful; and they must become more like us for similar reasons. That is the iron logic of long-run competition. The only way the force of this logic can be broken is for the competition to cease or one party to become a loser. But in this grandiose competition between the United States and the Soviet Union, *there must not be a loser*. Any loser would be tempted to risk nuclear disaster. Putting the worst eventualities aside, there will be competition without a loser, and in the end we will both be substantially similar in power and the qualities that would appeal to each other and the rest of the world.

The Russian challenge to compete offers us, in fact, a bright, new perspective. Abstractly, of course, we did not have to stand by nursing our budget while the Soviets rebuilt their war-devastated areas and created armament and a scientific establishment equal to ours. We could have instituted a real Point Four program, and established our own unattackable superiority through domestic reconstruction. But we didn't. Now we must. That is what the challenge has already accomplished.

Many people who refuse this challenge and perspective do so in reliance on two contradictory beliefs: that Russia's growth will result in mellowing, and that they will not, in fact, maintain a faster rate of growth than America, since they lack the genius of capitalist initiative and are over-burdened with dunderheaded bureaucratic control. The simple truth is that there is indeed waste in their centralization, but there is also terrible waste in our decentralization. The worst they do is to demand too little consumption by their masses or too much production by their managers, all with the purpose of building up the capital plant and using it at full capacity. Our worst is underproduction and spotty expansion, all in pursuit of paper-profit and excessively privileged consumption.

The state played an essential role in the accumulation of capital in America. Although there were great excesses and consequent hardships for the mass of the people, we were probably fortunate that it

was done the way it was. Certainly we avoided a Stalinist terror; there were no six million victims of enforced collectivization, no slave-labor camps where millions toiled under a five-year life expectancy. The labor gangs of Irish immigrants who built our railroads lived long enough to leave progeny prospering throughout the nation. But now the capital has been accumulated—there it is, the greatest collection of it the world has ever seen. What now? One system to accumulate it, another to use it. In each, the role of the state differs. The state facilitated its accumulation, and now it is charged with the responsibility of presiding over its proper use.

Whether we use or fail to use our productive plant, by revising or failing to revise the role of the state in the economy, we meet our fate domestically. How can we possibly base our policy on the assumption that the Russian bureaucrats will make enough convenient mistakes to balance out our misdirection and weakness? Their rate of growth and utilization of existing capacity are greater than ours, even if not as good as they say. If the seven-year plan takes fourteen years, all that does is to give us *time*—and what are we going to do with it? We cannot rely on their actual errors, and certainly not on our dogmatic ideology ensuring the inevitability of their errors—not in the face of their actual achievements to date.

It would be wonderful, of course, if Russia eventually mellowed into something like a consumers' democracy. The fatter and lazier they become, the better off we will be. But what if they don't become as fat and lazy as we are, or if they manage to take over the world before that happens, or if it just doesn't happen at all to China?

If one is entitled to hope that the situation will eventually ease up for the Russian people, then shouldn't we in America also look forward to a time when the American ruling system, based on old fortunes and new corporations, will also ease up on its prerogatives and restrictions and come to deal with our abundance more reasonably? What really would they lose by it? Just what the Russian rulers would lose by distributing greater benefits to their masses—power that serves no useful function, power for its own sake.

The most significant show of strength we could make to the Russians would be just this full and purposeful use of our productive capacity, including an increased rate of growth. It would change the entire atmosphere in the negotiation chambers. *Our failure to do so is the primary American weakness on which the Communists are counting.* With this issue, the imperatives of the cold war have interlocked with the necessities of domestic development, and the world political center

shifts to the American scene: our domestic politics have become crucial for the whole West.

American profits are not the Golden Fleece—they are a technique for accomplishing two purposes: to expand and perfect capital facilities, and to distribute consumption income unequally, according to property ownership rather than work. However one may feel about the latter, it is probably inconsequential so long as the overall system actually functions to produce and grow. To take away the luxuries of our privileged groups would perhaps so dishearten them that the whole system would flounder, as they are in control of it. Let them keep their high-living habits, the country can afford them and they create a style of life that entertains a whole nation of television-viewers. What the country cannot afford is that their paper-hunger should make them so shortsighted as to allow less-than-full production. If they benefit most from a system, then they have most to gain when it hums and most to lose if it is bested by the enemy. I don't know why they are having so much trouble comprehending this obvious fact.

The final problem is how to engage in total social and economic competition and still avoid totalitarianism; indeed, such avoidance is the very purpose of the engagement. There are two ways that totalitarianism could come to America. We have thus far in our public debate concerned ourselves only with the first, the imposition of Soviet will. The second avenue of escape from freedom is more truly possible: that is the very real chance that with their higher organization for national purpose, and our lack of it, the Communists will become so powerful in their own right and so compelling a force to the rest of the world that in a panic of late realization we will remold ourselves in their image, in order as quickly as possible to become as powerful as they. It will take time and imagination to learn to organize ourselves adequately while providing for the highest possible measure of free participation in bureaucratic industrialism. Our chance to organize without excessive autocracy is *now*. If we have to organize for power in a hurry, the delicacies of freedom will be dispensed with as extra ballast.

Let's state the final problem in a positive fashion. It would seem that the remaining issue for the human race, now that it has decided not to be poor any longer, is freedom. The issue is not the simple, convenient one of capitalism versus Communism. It is not the issue of freedom, in the sense of lack of organization, as against slavery, meaning merely a bureaucratically dominated society. Because when we—

Americans and Russians and more to follow—committed ourselves to scientific industrialism, we necessarily also took on a considerable degree of bureaucracy. The issue is freedom as possible decentralization of power, opposed to slavery as absolute centralization of power. *How to decentralize power in a highly organized bureaucratic society is the one true issue.* The cold war is a holding action to give the West time in which to come up with fresh solutions to this problem.

The social cost of private control of capital—and non-elected managers of it—is very high. Some of this cost may well have been a good buy historically, for the extent of decentralization achieved or perpetuated by it. But we have such a large, intricate social economy that it is absolutely necessary that it be effectively and purposefully organized. The profit motive alone is absurdly inept as an exclusive principle to accomplish this.

Democracy as we believe in it was a result of bourgeois property and “free” labor; we are now too big to rely on such old-fashioned grounds for democracy. We have the same problem as the Russians, with perhaps more unrealized opportunities: *to create a means for democratic participation in the institutions and activities of mass industrial-scientific society.* That is the situation. There is only one other thing: the inherent freedom of Western culture available to those very few men who participate in the tradition as free-thinking individuals. They can be counted in the tens of thousands throughout the Western world; there are three billion people on the planet and more every second. I know many cultivated intellectuals believe that mention of these facts in conjunction is not much more than a sentimental reference. They are wrong.

A final word on this Russian-American comparison: generally speaking, *other people are not that different.* Our insistence that they are is just one of the means we have for not understanding them—and, consequently, ourselves. We suffer from a deadly drive toward Russophobic paranoia, which is especially dangerous because the cure is apt to be worse than the disease. Paranoia involves a deep identification with the hated object, particularly as its power is revealed by a cumulation of successes. The hate returns more and more to the fear that created it, and the feared object looms so large on the emotional screen that an identity with it, however distorted, is the only remaining means of making the world bearable. There is a deep well of weakness in this posture, as if fear and hatred are welcomed because the truth cannot be faced.

So let's face the truth: Two hundred million Russians are not

just Stalin, not even just the Communist Party. And neither Stalin nor the Communist Party were big enough to make it possible for the Soviet Union to escape history. They are foolish in many ways; they suffer from a monomaniacal concentration on power which almost equals our American obsession with profits and high living, but they have not escaped the modern history of industrialism and industrialization, bureaucracy and bureaucratization, scientists and scientism. They are no more and no less human in these weird new circumstances than we. We are no more nor less than they—each is just farther along different roads.

Viewing the Soviet-American confrontation without paranoia, it is clear that the impasse must be met and can only be resolved as a matter of domestic American politics. Unfortunately, in America nothing important happens except in a crisis, and it is up to our leaders to indicate the existence of the current one in all its immensity. Walt W. Rostow is exceptionally perceptive about this aspect of the cold war:

The heart of the Soviet challenge lies, then, in presenting us with a situation where our interests may be eroded away, without palpable crisis, to a point where a traditional convulsive American response will no longer suffice. Our conceptions and methods of allocation to the public sector are inappropriate to a world caught up in a technological arms race and a slow grinding struggle for power and ideological conception in the underdeveloped areas. It is not the Soviet growth rate we need fear but a mode of American allocation which tends to imprison us at a level of public outlays determined by our arbitrary response to the last major crisis.

We all have to think about *conditions* as they come into being, because it is the essence of the new world that we believe in conditions as determining existence, including spiritual existence, if any. This so-called scientific idea is practically all the baggage we are taking with us on our terror-ridden and terribly human journey from the old Christian world through this present existential desert into the new proletarian land of plenty. And let's think now, because later is too late.

What I say is, why don't we "go to war" for a decade or two? If we don't, we will lose the world—probably including ourselves, since we are part of it—to Communism. If we are not to lose, then we must go to this new war eventually. If we do so sooner rather than later, we have a better chance of winning—of preserving our freedoms in the process. It's that simple.

It's a *new* kind of war.

MOVIE CHRONICLE: LITTLE MEN

A TASTE OF HONEY

The audiences at popular American movies seem to want heroes they can look up to; the audiences at art houses seem to want heroes they can look down on. Does this mean that as we become more educated, we no longer believe in the possibilities of heroism? The “realistic,” “adult” movie often means the movie in which the hero is a little man like, presumably, the little men in the audience.

A year or so ago art-house audiences were carried away by *Ballad of a Soldier* and its “refreshing” look of purity and innocence. The new refresher may be *A Taste of Honey*. The inexperienced young hero of *Ballad of a Soldier* was too shy and idealistic to make any direct overtures to the heroine; the hero of *A Taste of Honey* goes beyond inexperience, he’s inadequate—and audiences love him all the more for it. I didn’t much like the material of *Ballad of a Soldier*, but it was well handled to achieve its effects; I do like Shelagh Delaney’s material, but the movie treatment is rather coarse. Tony Richardson is beginning to gain assurance of the wrong kind: in *A Taste of Honey* his direction is more *controlled* than in *Look Back in Anger* or *The Entertainer*, but it is at the expense of some of the best material in the modern theater. His treatment of *A Taste of Honey* is both more pretentious and less exciting than the slender material of the play. He has learned how to package the material and build in the responses like an American director. He doesn’t take a chance on our reaching out to the characters or feelings; everything is pushed at us. What should be a lyric sketch is all filled in and spelled out until it becomes almost a comic melodrama.

The play, written by an eighteen year old working-class Lancashire girl, has fresh dialogue and feeling and warmth. The story is simple: Jo (Rita Tushingham), a schoolgirl, temporarily abandoned by her fun-loving mother who goes off with a new husband, has an affair with a Negro seaman, and then meets a lonely fellow-spirit, a homosexual,

Geoff (Murray Melvin), who moves in with her and looks after her during her pregnancy. I use the novelettish term “fellow-spirit” intentionally, because I think it helps to establish the idyllic frame of reference. The story is about a little mock paradise that is lost: the mother comes back and throws Geoff out, but Jo has had her taste of the honey of sweet companionship. *A Taste of Honey* is a fairy tale set in modern industrial ugliness. Geoff in this story is a combination Peter Pan and homemaking Wendy who had to have a pretend baby, and he’s a fairy godmother as well. The girl Jo is herself a Peter Pan figure: stubborn, independent, capering and whimsical, ignoring most of the world, moved only by what interests her. The background music—children’s songs—further aligns Jo and Geoff with the world and the charm of children. Their pleasures are innocent and carefree; by contrast, the grownups are almost all horrible objects, sexual in a nasty, grotesque way.

Perhaps the greatest charm of *A Taste of Honey*, and this is a distinctively modern charm, is in the poetry of role confusion. The mother and daughter don’t have a parent-child relationship; they are more like bickering siblings. And Jo and Geoff are not like woman and man but like *non-bickering* siblings, Geoff the older sister looking after Jo, the disorderly younger sister, in what is a bit of a parody of the maternal relationship Jo has not previously experienced. These role confusions are presented by Shelagh Delaney with simple directness and without any moralizing.

What’s the matter with the film? Perhaps I can get at this indirectly. Have you ever, after an exhausting all-night party or conversation, taken a walk at dawn? It’s cleansing and beautiful and you decide that you’ll change your way of life, get up early, breathe the fresh air. Well, the movie is about the way the morning air feels for those who naturally get up in it, but it appears to be made by people who stayed up all night and then, tired and hung over, *discovered* the morning air and thought it was a great thing and more people should know about it.

It’s not as if it were done in Hollywood—you may have heard about the Hollywood producer who wanted to make the film with Audrey Hepburn as Jo and give it a typical American upbeat ending by having the child born dead. (With Audrey Hepburn *could* it be born alive?) You have to be familiar with Hollywood’s curious codes to understand that killing off the little bastard squares everything; and the heroine, having suffered, would then be redeemed. This film doesn’t attempt to lick the material at the Hollywood level, but the director simply can’t find the innocence or the imagination or the style that the boisterous, contagious material deserves and *needs*. The performers are good, but the

camera emphasizes their qualities until even their best work seems overdone. If only we could discover the lyric qualities in Rita Tushingham's Jo—but Richardson doesn't give us credit for enough vision (perhaps because his own eye isn't very good); he keeps shoving close-ups at us until we've had too much of her homely gamin beauty. And the mother (Dora Bryan), in particular, is handled with low comic crudity. It's enough to see her singing and on a dance floor; do we also need the easy laugh of seeing her in a room alone bending over, with the camera glued to her corseted backside? Do we need to see her aging flesh in the bathtub? Do we need to have her behaving like a crude villainess, turning the hapless, unwanted little Geoff out of the house?

As a director, Richardson *does* moralize. He's always looking for points he can drive home, for larger social nuances—for the obvious that he finds so meaningful. (The working-class author couldn't be expected to have the social-consciousness that an educated liberal can supply.) He isn't content with the material; he wants to make a *statement*. And what can make a statement so *visually* as the grimy working-class watelands of industrial England? Richardson uses actual locations, but he uses them like sets; the backgrounds are cleverly selected, but merely cleverly selected. The documentary backgrounds are *additional* visual material: they don't so much help to tell Jo and Geoff's story as to reveal the director's story.

A Taste of Honey doesn't do anything for the art of the film, but it has, nevertheless, altered our environment. The sad-eyed queen is the new hero.

The crazy mixed-up kid is an "exhausted" theme—exhausted because the movies couldn't deal with the boring, prosperous, conformist society the kids were reacting against, and had to pretend the kids were simply unloved and misunderstood. Audiences longing for a hero to lavish their sympathies on have a new unfortunate they can clasp to their social-worker hearts: the ideal "little man," the homemaker, the pure-in-heart, childlike, non-threatening male, the man a girl can feel safe with—and who could be more "deprived"? They can feel tender and tolerant, and they can feel contemptuous, and in-the-know at the same time: the man a girl can feel safe with is a joke, he's not a man at all. The role-confusion of the story becomes the source of gratification for the audience: Geoff is poetic because he's inadequate, and you're not just having a dirty laugh, you're accepting life. Romance and comedy are one: the hero is the butt. And the audience, having had him both ways, feels worldly and satisfied.

VICTIM

It was a bit startling to pick up an English newspaper and see that the review of *Victim* was entitled "Ten-letter word"—but as it turned out, *The Observer* was referring not to Lenny Bruce's much publicized hyphenated word but to the simple term "homosexual," which it appears is startling enough in a movie to make the Johnson office refuse to give *Victim* a seal of approval.

I suppose it's too crude simply to say that *Victim* is *The Mark* in drag but that's not so far from the truth. Like the man who wanted to rape a child but didn't, the hero of *Victim* wants to but doesn't make it with another guy. The lesser characters make out; they don't have the hero's steel will, and they are very pathetic indeed, given to such self-illuminating expressions as "Nature played me a dirty trick." I'm beginning to long for one of those old-fashioned movie stereotypes—the vicious, bitchy old queen who said mean, funny things. We may never again have those Franklin Pangborn roles, now that homosexuals are going to be treated seriously, with sympathy and respect, like Jews and Negroes. It's difficult to judge how far sensitivities will go: *Remembrance of Things Past* may soon be frowned upon like *Huckleberry Finn* and *The Merchant of Venice*. Social progress makes strange bedfellows.

Victim manages to get past other censorial bodies by being basically a thriller, a fairly slick suspense story about a blackmailing ring. But it's a cleverly conceived *moralistic* thriller: as the victims of the ring are homosexuals, various characters are able to point out the viciousness of the English laws, which, by making homosexuality a crime, make homosexuals the victims of ninety percent of the blackmail cases. Just about everyone in the movie has attitudes designed to illuminate the legal problems of homosexuality; without the thriller structure, the moralizing message could get awfully sticky. As it is, the film is moderately amusing.

A number of the reviewers were uneasy about the thesis that consenting adults should be free from legal prosecution for their sex habits; they felt that if homosexuality were not a crime it would spread. (The assumption seems to be that heterosexuality couldn't hold its own in a free market.) *Time's* attitude to the film is a classic example of *Time's* capacity for worrying:

But what seems at first an attack on extortion seems at last a coyly sensational exploitation of homosexuality as a theme—and, what's more offensive, an implicit approval of homo-

sexuality as a practice. Almost all the deviates in the film are fine fellows—well dressed, well spoken, sensitive, kind . . . Nowhere does the film suggest that homosexuality is a serious (but often curable) neurosis that attacks the biological basis of life itself.

On one page *Time* is worried about the population explosion, and on the next it's upset because homosexuals aren't reproducing. (An unwarranted assumption, by the way.)

Time should really be very happy with the movie, because the hero of the film is a man who has never given way to his homosexual impulses; he has fought them—that's part of his heroism. Maybe that's why he seems such a stuffy stock figure of a hero. Oedipus didn't merely want to sleep with Jocasta; he slept with her.

There is, incidentally, a terribly self-conscious and unconvincing attempt to distinguish between the "love" the barrister feels for his wife and the physical desire—presumably some lower order of emotion—that he felt for a boy who is more interesting in every way than his wife. And I find it difficult to accept all the upper-class paraphernalia of stage melodrama; it's hard to believe in people who live at the level on which if you feel insulted by someone's conversation, you show him the door. A minor problem in trying to take *Victim* seriously even as a thriller is that the suspense involves a series of "revelations" that several of the highly-placed characters have been concealing their homosexuality; but actors, and especially English actors, generally look so queer anyway, that it's hard to be surprised at what we've always taken for granted—in fact, in this suspense context of who is and who isn't, it's hard to believe in the actors who are supposed to be straight.

Some months ago, reviewing *The Mark*, I discussed the uncomfortable feeling I got that we were supposed to feel sympathetic toward the hero because he was such a pained, unhappy, dull man, and that his sexual problem was the only focus of interest in him. In *Victim* there is so much effort to make us feel sympathetic toward the homosexuals that they are never even allowed to be *gay*. The dreadful irony involved is that Dirk Bogarde looks so pained, so anguished from the self-sacrifice of repressing his homosexuality, that the film seems to give rather a black eye to the heterosexual life.

LOLITA

The ads asked "How did they ever make a movie of *Lolita* for persons over 18 years of age?" but did not attempt an answer; the suggestion

is planted that the movie had “licked” the book, and that *Lolita* has been turned into the usual kind of sexy movie. The advertising has been slanted to the mass audience, so the art-house audience isn’t going. A sizable part of the mass audience doesn’t like the movie (their rejection is being interpreted as a vote for “wholesomeness,” which according to *Variety* is about to stage a comeback) and the art-house audience is missing out on one of the few American films it might enjoy.

Recommend the film to friends and they reply, “Oh I’ve *had* it with *Lolita*.” It turns out (now that *Lolita* can be purchased for 50¢ and so is in the category of ordinary popular books) that they never thought much of it; but even though they didn’t really like the book, they don’t want to see the movie because of all the changes that have been made in the book. Others had heard so much about the book, they thought reading it superfluous (they had as *good* as read it—they were *tired* of it); and if the book was too much talked about to necessitate a reading, surely going to the film was really *de trop*.²

Besides, wasn’t the girl who played *Lolita* practically a *matron*? *The New York Times* said, “She looks to be a good seventeen,” and the rest of the press seemed to concur in this peculiarly inexperienced judgment. *Time* opened its review with “Wind up the *Lolita* doll and it goes to Hollywood and commits nymphanticide” and closed with “*Lolita* is the saddest and most important victim of the current reckless adaptation fad . . .” In *The Observer* the premiere of the film was described under the heading “*Lolita* fiasco” and the writer concluded that the novel had been “turned into a film about this poor English guy who is being given the runaround by this sly young broad.” In *The New Republic* Stanley Kauffmann wrote, “It is clear that Nabokov respects the novel. It is equally clear that he does not respect the film—at least as it is used in America . . . He has given to films the *Lolita* that, presumably, he thinks the medium deserves . . .” After all this, who would expect anything from the film?

The surprise of *Lolita* is how enjoyable it is: it’s the first *new* American comedy since those great days in the 1940’s when Preston Sturges recreated comedy with verbal slapstick. *Lolita* is black slapstick and at times it’s so far out that you gasp as you laugh. At its best (which is about half the time) it makes most of the “New American Cinema” look square. An inspired Peter Sellers creates a new comic pattern—a crazy quilt of psychological, sociological commentary so “hip” it’s surrealist. It doesn’t cover everything: there are structural weaknesses, the film falls apart, and there’s even a forced and humiliating attempt to “explain” the plot. But when the wit is galloping who’s

going to look a gift horse in the mouth? Critics, who feel decay in their bones.

The reviews are a comedy of grey matter. Doubts may have remained after Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.'s ex cathedra judgment that *Lolita* is "willful, cynical and repellent . . . It is not only inhuman; it is anti-human. I am reluctantly glad that it was made, but I trust it will have no imitators." Then, "for a learned and independent point of view, *Show* invited Dr. Reinhold Niebuhr, the renowned theologian, to a screening in New York and asked him for an appraisal." The higher primate discovered that " . . . the theme of this triangular relationship exposes the unwholesome attitudes of mother, daughter, and lover to a mature observer." This mature observer does however find some "few saving moral insights"—though he thinks the film "obscures" them—such as "the lesson of *Lolita*'s essential redemption in a happy marriage." (Had any *peripheral* redemptions lately?)

Bosley Crowther, who can always be counted on to miss the point, writes that "Mr. Kubrick inclines to dwell too long over scenes that have slight purpose, such as scenes in which Mr. Sellers does various comical impersonations as the sneaky villain who dogs Mr. Mason's trail." These scenes "that have slight purpose" are, of course, just what make *Lolita* new, these are the scenes that make it, for all its slackness of pace and clumsy editing, a more exciting comedy than the last American comedy, *Some Like It Hot*. Quilty the success, the writer of scenarios and school plays, the policeman, the psychologist; Quilty the genius, the man whom *Lolita* loves, Humbert's brother and tormentor and parodist; Quilty the man of the world is a conception to talk about alongside Melville's *The Confidence Man*. "Are you with someone?" Humbert asks the policeman. And Quilty the policeman replies "I'm not with someone. I'm with you."

The Quilty monologues are worked out almost like the routines of silent comedy—they not only carry the action forward, they comment on it, and this comment is the *new* action of the film. There has been much critical condescension toward Sellers, who's alleged to be an impersonator rather than an actor, a man with many masks but no character. Now Sellers does a turn with the critics' terms: his Quilty is a character employing masks, an actor with a merciless talent for impersonation. He is indeed "the sneaky villain who dogs Mr. Mason's trail"—and he digs up every bone that "Mr. Mason" ineptly tries to bury, and presents it to him. Humbert can conceal nothing. But our horror is split by laughter: Humbert has it coming—not because he's having "relations" with a minor, but because, in order to conceal his

sexual predilections, he has put on the most obsequious and mealy-minded of masks. Humbert is a worm and Quilty knows it.

Peter Sellers works with miserable physical equipment as an actor, yet he has somehow managed to turn his lumbering, wide-hipped body into an advantage by *acting* to perfection the man without physical assets. The soft slow-moving, paper-pushing middle-class man is his special self-effacing type; and though only in his mid-thirties he all too easily incarnates sly, smug middle-aged man. Even his facial muscles are kept flaccid, so that he always looks weary, too tired and cynical for much of a response. The rather frightening strength of his Quilty (who has enormous—almost sinister—reserves of energy) is peculiarly effective just because of his lumbering, ordinary, “normal” look. He does something that seems impossible: he makes unattractiveness magnetic.

Quilty—rightly, in terms of the film as distinguished from the novel—dominates *Lolita* (which could use much more of him) and James Mason’s Humbert, who makes attractiveness tired and exhausted and impotent, is a remarkable counterpart. Quilty who doesn’t care, who wins Lolita and throws her out, Quilty the homewrecker is a winner; Humbert, slavishly, painfully in love, absurdly suffering, the lover of the ages who degrades himself, who cares about nothing but Lolita, is the classic loser. Mason is better than (and different from) what almost anyone could have expected; the handsome face gloats in a rotting smile. Mason seems to need someone strong to play against. He’s very good in the scenes with Charlotte and with her friends, but his scenes with Lolita, when he must dominate the action, fall rather flat.

If you can get over the reviewers’ preoccupation with the sacredness of the novel (they don’t complain this much about Hollywood’s changes in biblical stories) you’ll probably find that even the characters that *are* different (Charlotte Haze, especially, who has become the culture-vulture rampant) are successful in terms of the film. Shelley Winters’ Charlotte is a triumphant caricature, so overdone it recalls Blake’s “You never know what is enough until you know what is more than enough.”

Sue Lyon is perhaps a little less than enough—but not because she looks seventeen. (Have the reviewers looked at the school-girls of America lately? The classmates of my fourteen-year-old daughter are not merely nubile: some of them look badly used.) Rather it is because her role is insufficiently written. Sue Lyon herself is good (at times her face is amusingly suggestive of a miniature Elvis Presley) though physically too *young* to be convincing in her last scenes. (I don’t mean

that to sound paradoxical but merely descriptive.) Kubrick and company have been attacked most for the area in which they have been simply accurate: they could have done up Sue Lyon in childish schoolgirl clothes, but the facts of American life are that adolescents and even pre-adolescents wear nylons and make-up and two-piece strapless bathing suits and have *figures*.

Lolita isn't a good movie but that's almost beside the point: excitement is sustained by a brilliant idea, a new variant on the classic chase theme—Quilty as Humbert's walking paranoia, the madness that chases Humbert and is chased by him, over what should be the delusionary landscape of the actual United States. This panoramic confusion of normal and mad that can be experienced traveling around the country is, unfortunately, lost: the film badly needs the towns and motels and highways of the U.S. It suffers not only from the genteel English landscapes, but possibly also from the photographic style of Oswald Morris—perhaps justly famous, but subtly wrong (and too tasteful) for *Lolita*. It may seem like a dreadfully “uncinematic” idea, but I rather wish that Kubrick, when he realized that he couldn't shoot in the U.S. (the reasons must have been economic) had experimented with stylized sets.

There is a paradox involved in the film *Lolita*. Stanley Kubrick shows talents in new areas (theme and dialogue and comedy), and is at his worst at what he's famous for. *The Killing* was a simple-minded suspense film about a race-track robbery, but he structured it brilliantly with each facet shining in place; *Paths of Glory* was a simple-minded pacifist film, but he gave it nervous rhythm and a sense of urgency. *Lolita* is so clumsily structured that you begin to wonder what was shot and then cut out, why other pieces were left in, and whether the beginning was intended to be the end; and it is edited in so dilatory a fashion that after the first hour, almost every scene seems to go on too long. It's as if Kubrick lost his nerve. If he did, it's no wonder; the wonder is, that with all the pressures on American moviemakers—the pressures to evade, to conceal, to compromise, and to explain everything for the literal-minded—he had the nerve to transform this satire on the myths of love into the medium that has become consecrated to the myths. *Lolita* is a wilder comedy for being, now, family entertainment. Movie theatres belong to the same world as the highways and motels: in first-run theatres, “for persons over 18 years of age” does not mean that children are prohibited but simply that there are no reduced prices for children. In second-run neighborhood theatres, “for persons over 18 years of age” is amended by “unless accompanied by a member of the family.” That befits the story of Humbert Humbert.

JULES AND JIM

When the Legion of Decency condemned *Jules and Jim* earlier this year, the statement read: the story has been developed "in a context alien to Christian and traditional natural morality." It certainly has. The Legion went on to say: "If the director has a definite moral viewpoint to express, it is so obscure that the visual amorality and immorality of the film are predominant and consequently pose a serious problem for a mass medium of entertainment." There is really no answer to this sort of thing: it is perfectly true that Truffaut does not have "a definite moral viewpoint to express." This absence of moral judgments is part of the point of the film; it is even the art of the film.

It would be possible to make a fraudulent case for the film's morality by pointing out that the adulterous individuals suffer and die, but this is so specious and so irrelevant to the meanings and qualities of the work that surely the Legion, expert in these matters, would recognize that it was casuistry. The Legion isn't wrong about the visual amorality either, and yet, *Jules and Jim* is not only one of the most beautiful films ever made, and the greatest motion picture of recent years, it is also, viewed as a work of art, exquisitely and impeccably *moral*. Truffaut does not use the screen for messages or special pleading or to sell sex for money; he uses the film medium to express his love and knowledge of life as completely as he can.

The film is adapted from Henri-Pierre Roché's autobiographical novel, written when he was seventy-four. It has never been translated into English, and if some of us have heard of Roché, it's probably just from the scrap of information that he was the man who introduced Gertrude Stein to Picasso—but this scrap shouldn't be discarded, because both Stein and Picasso are relevant to the characters and period of *Jules and Jim*. Roché is now dead, but the model for Catherine, the Jeanne Moreau role, is a German literary woman who is still alive; it was she who translated *Lolita* into German. Truffaut has indicated, also, that some of the material which he improvised on location was suggested by Apollinaire's letters to Marie Laurencin.

The film begins in Paris before the first World War. Jules the Austrian (Oskar Werner) and Jim the Frenchman (Henri Serre) are Mutt and Jeff, Sancho Panza and Don Quixote, devoted friends, contentedly arguing about life and letters. Catherine enters their lives, and Jules and Jim try to have both the calm of their friendship and the excitement of her imperious, magical presence. She marries Jules who can't hold her, and in despair he encourages Jim's interest in her—"That way she'll still be *ours*." But Catherine can't subjugate Jim: he is

too independent to be dominated by her whims. Not completely captivated, Jim fails to believe in her love when she most desperately offers it. She kills herself and him.

The music, the camera and editing movement, the rhythm of the film carry us along without pauses for reflection. Truffaut doesn't linger; nothing is held too long, nothing is over-stated or even *stated*. Perhaps that's why others besides the Legion of Decency have complained: Stanley Kauffmann in *The New Republic* says that *Jules and Jim* "loses sight of purposes . . . It is a confusion of the sheer happiness of being in the studio . . . with the reason for being there." Truffaut creates movies as other men create novels or poems or paintings; he is the most youthfully alive and abundant of all the major film directors. He needs a *reason* for making films about as much as Picasso needs a reason for picking up a brush or a lump of clay. And of what filmmaker could a reference to a *studio* be less apt? He works everywhere and with anything at hand. Kauffmann says of *Jules and Jim*, "There is a lot less here than meets the eye," and Dwight Macdonald, who considers Kauffmann his only peer, is reassured: "one doesn't want to be the only square," he writes. If it gives him comfort to know there are two of them . . .

What is the film about? It's a celebration of life in a great historical period, a period of ferment and extraordinary achievement in painting and music and literature. Together Jules and Jim have a peaceful friendship (and Jim has a quiet love affair with Gilberte) but when Jules and Jim are with Catherine they feel alive. Anything may happen—she's the catalyst, the troublemaker, the source of despair as well as the source of joy. She is the enchantress who makes art out of life.

At the end, Jules, who has always given in to everything in order to keep Catherine, experiences relief at her death, although he has always delighted in the splendor she conferred on his existence. The dullness in Jules, the bourgeois under the Bohemian, the passivity is made clear from the outset: it is why the girls don't fall in love with him. At the end, the excitements and humiliations are over. He will have peace, and after a lifetime with Catherine he has earned it.

Catherine is, of course, a little crazy, but that's not too surprising. Pioneers can easily become fanatics, maniacs. And Catherine is part of a new breed—the independent, intellectual modern woman, so determined to live as freely as a man that while claiming equality she uses every feminine wile to gain extra advantages, to demonstrate her superiority, and to increase her power-position. She is the emerging twentieth-century woman satirized by Strindberg, who also adored her;

she is the woman with rights and responsibilities who entered Western literature after the turn of the century and has almost always been seen by the male authors as demanding the rights but refusing the responsibilities. This is the traditional male view of the feminist, and the film's view is not different.

Catherine, in her way, compensates for the homage she demands. She has, despite her need to intrude and to dominate, the gift for life. She holds nothing in reserve; she lives out her desires; when she can't control the situation, she destroys it. Catherine may be wrong-headed—as those who aspire to be free spirits often are (and they make this wrongness more visible than pliable, amiable people do) but she is devoid of hypocrisy and she doesn't lie. In one of the most upsetting and odd little scenes in the film she takes out a bottle which she says is “vitriol for lying eyes”—and Jim doesn't react any more than if it were aspirin. Catherine the free spirit has the insanity of many free spirits—she believes that she knows truth from lies, right from wrong. Her absolutism is fascinating, but it is also rather clearly *morally insane*. She punishes Jim because he has not broken with Gilberte, though she has not broken with Jules. Only the relationships *she* sets and dominates are *right*. Catherine suffers from the fatal ambivalence of the “free and equal” woman toward sex: she can leave men, but if they leave her, she is as abandoned and desolate, as destroyed and helpless as any clinging vine. *Jules and Jim* is about the impossibility of freedom, as it is about the many losses of innocence.

All these elements are elliptical in the film—you catch them out of the corner of your eye and mind. So much is caught in the span of an hour and three quarters that even if you don't catch more than a fraction of the possible meanings in the material, you still get far more than if you examined almost any other current film, frame by frame, under a microscope. *Jules and Jim* is as full of character and wit and radiance as *Marienbad* is empty, and the performance by Jeanne Moreau is so vivid that the bored, alienated wife of *La Notte* is a faded monochrome. In *Jules and Jim* alienation is just one aspect of her character and we see how Catherine got there: she *becomes* alienated when she can't get her own way, when she is blocked. It is not a universal condition as in *La Notte* (neither Jules nor Jim shares in it): it is her developing insanity as she is cut off from what she wants and no longer takes pleasure in life.

Jules and Jim are portraits of artists as young men, but they are the kind of artists who grow up into something else—they become specialists in some field, or journalists; and the dedication to art of their youth

becomes the *civilizing* influence in their lives. The war blasts the images of Bohemian life; both Jules and Jim are changed, but not Catherine. She is the unreconstructed Bohemian who does *not* settle down. She needed more strength, more will than they to live the artist's life—and this determination is the *uncivilizing* factor. Bohemianism has made her, underneath all the graces, a moral barbarian: freedom has come to mean whatever she says it is. And when she loses what she believes to be freedom—when she can no longer dictate the terms on which Jim will live—she is lost, destroyed. She no longer makes art out of life; she makes life hell.

She chooses death, and she calls on Jules to observe her choice, the last demonstration of her power over life and death, because Jules by a lifetime of yielding his own freedom to her has become, to her, a witness. He can only observe grand gestures; he cannot *make* them. In the last moment in the car, when self-destruction is completely determined, she smiles the smile of the statue: this was the mystery that drew them to her—the smile that looks so easy and natural but which is self-contained and impenetrable.

Jules and Jim ends after the burning of the books in Germany, the end of an epoch, as Truffaut has said, for intellectual Bohemians like Jules and Jim. The film is, in a way, a tribute to the books that were burned; I can't think of another movie so full of books, and of references to books and of writing and translating books. Books were the blood of these characters: they took their ideas of life from books, and writing books was their idea of living.

Jules and Jim is, among other things, the best movie ever made about what I guess most of us think of as the Scott Fitzgerald period. Catherine jumping into the waters of the Seine to demonstrate her supremacy over Jules and Jim who are discussing the weaknesses of women, is not unlike Zelda jumping over that balustrade. This filmic treatment of the period is a work of lyric poetry, a work of art as complex and suggestive in its way as the paintings and poetry and novels and music of the period that it is based on. It is a tribute to the school of Paris when art and Paris were synonymous; filmically it is a new school of Paris—and the new school of Paris is cinema. You go to movies, you talk movies, and you make movies. The young French painters don't compare with the Americans, and French literature is in a fancy trance, but oh, how the young French artists can make movies!

Several of the critics, among them Kauffmann, have complained that the song Jeanne Moreau sings is irrelevant to the action of the film. It's embarrassing to have to point out the obvious, that the song is the

theme and spirit of the film: Jules and Jim and Catherine are the ones who “make their way in life’s whirlpool of days—round and round together bound.” And, in the film, the song is an epiphany: when Catherine sings, the story is crystallized, and the song, like Jim and the child rolling on the hill, seems to belong to memory almost before it is over. In the same way, the still shots catch for us, as for the characters, the distillation, the beauty of the moment. Throughout the film, George Delerue’s exquisite music—simple and fragrant, popular without being banal—is part of the atmosphere; it is so evocative that if you put the music on the phonograph, like the little phrase from Vinteuil’s sonata, it brings back the images, the emotions, the experience. Though emotionally in the tradition of Jean Renoir, as a work of film craftsmanship *Jules and Jim* is an homage to D. W. Griffith. Truffaut explores the medium, plays with it, overlaps scenes, uses fast cutting in the manner of *Breathless*, changes the size and shape of the images as Griffith did, and in one glorious act of homage he recreates a frame out of *Intolerance*. *Jules and Jim* is the most exciting movie made in the west since *L’Avventura* and *Breathless* and Truffaut’s earlier *Shoot the Piano Player*; because of the beauty and warmth of its images, it is a richer, a more satisfying film than any of them. I think it will rank among the great lyric achievements of the screen, right up there with the work of Griffith and Renoir.

Pauline Kael

RICHARD CHASE 1915-1962

We are saddened by the death of Richard Chase, who had written often for this periodical.

LETTER FROM VENICE:

SHOOTING THE WORKS

From the pigeon's-eye view, and the cat's, the stones of Venice are unchanged. On these levels neither the citizen nor the tourist makes a great impression. Carpaccio and Bellini, Canaletto and Guardi would feel at home. Venice is where the dreams cross without wrecking the place.

Another city, however, exists at man's eye level. On this level, the tourist will not know where he is by consulting a map. He must turn to the index of his Buyer's Guide. Is it leather goods, beads, fine lace and cameras? Or is it sweaters, shoes, Murano glass and Scotch whiskey? Increasingly the guide is not reliable as to where one is. The same things—the same fashionable things—are everywhere. It is safer to ask the polylingual hostess who guides the tour.

On this level, Venice, as we say, is making great strides. This morning my wife said, "Guess what? Instant potatoes!" The same store features a window full of Scotch whiskey. Only the best. This is the year for Scotch. A gasoline-type price war brings it to your door at about four dollars a bottle. These handsome bottles ornament windows usually given over to more basic matters. They catch, as nothing else, the tourist's roving eye. On this level, indeed, the native is a tourist, he is lured by goodies from strange places, and fashion dictates that he buy them. As he does. The smart men's shops offer leather ties and rope-handled shoe horns. The smart ladies' shops offer shopping bags of gold lamé.

In her smock the shopgirl looks quite "European" if one ignores the pyramid of her hair, but try to pick her out of the crowd as she does a little shopping of her own. She wears a short skirt and a long sweater. A corpse-tone lipstick shows the influence of Brigitte Bardot. She would fit the decor of any American campus with one exception—

her shoes are better and she knows how to *walk*. If you are a parent with a teen-age daughter you will know what is on her mind. With her hairdo, her uplift bra, her album of rock and roll records, she is as much a tourist in this city as we are. Perhaps more. Our dreams are here. Hers are elsewhere. Almost *anywhere* else. She reads magazines. What Liz Taylor knows, she knows. If that is not much, it is what goes and has done pretty well for Liz Taylor. My neighbor's daughter, who plays and sings a version of the twist as I sit here typing, will prove to be not much different from her mother—but her husband won't think so. Not one bit.

The young men of Venice—the young we see on Festa days, when the houses empty—appear to need a good sensible girl to look after them. Not that they are wild. They're just nice boys who need a sensible girl to look after them. A nice boy we know has such a girl, and we are waiting for her to take over his shop. It is a good one. For several months we have been buying his supply of *our* wine. Last week he ran out. To order, or go get more, is an idea that seems alien to him. He prefers to try and sell us the wine we do not want. There is, and he has, a lot of it. We feel that his girl will grasp this problem, and boldly convey the idea to him, but this *vita nova* is still many months away. We shall be gone, and we hope she can sell the wine he now has.

The sirocco brings to Venice what I would describe as good Philadelphia weather, plus a reminder that there is more than water in the canals. The tide that flushes the city exposes a ripe, odorous surface, as well as the freight of garbage that tends to float. Bottles, cartons, paper bags, orange and grapefruit skins, filter tip cigarette butts. The city has an admirable garbage collection system—when we forget to put it out our garbage man politely knocks—but the habits of the ancient régime die hard. It is still convenient, if you live near a canal, to open the window and let fly in the general direction of the water. This practice is favored by those who live higher up. Those who live lower down, like us, look upon it with mixed blessings, since the casement is sometimes littered with the dryer sort of garbage. On rare occasions there are dividends. We recently found four filter tip cigarettes in a cellophane pack with a peel of apple, but even as I sniffed them the phone rang, and the higher-up owner identified them. STOP, American type cigarettes. He put down a fishpole with a hook on the end, and that was that.

Some of the garbage makes the canal, where it falls with the

plush of a body, but most of it strews the alley where it is picked over by the cats. A sad-hearted breed, these scavengers. Nothing will deprive a cat of its cathood, but it will soon give up certain virtues that attract us. Serenity, a regal but casual dignity, a sense of place that makes the place seem home-like—these virtues the scavenger can seldom afford. They are tolerated, not encouraged, on the premise that they keep the alleys free of rats. About eight such cats share the block on which we live. Their love affairs ornament the nights. The Venetian theory would seem to be to salvage one kitten from each litter, but the practice varies. It would still mean too many cats. The great majority go into the canals. That an alternative exists I have never heard mentioned. One gathers that the dog fares better, being something of a novelty and larger. Scale is important. A litter of pups will not fit in the hand. To drown them would be somewhat more difficult. In an age when fertility seems more of a liability than a virtue, this wearisome process lies heavier on the mind of man than on the mind of cats. They go about their business. And business still seems to be good.

We are tourists, but we share with the natives a certain distaste for the *real* tourists—the gentlemen with the cameras, the covey of females with the map. They throng the Piazza like the pigeons, and a few lose themselves in our alleys. We hear the sound as the map is unfolded, turned this way, then that. The sweet honey of malice the native must feel for the nightly hosts of touring gondolas two nights ago dripped on our lips, and we found it to our taste. A hot, sirocco night, the water leaden and oily, we peered from the bridge over the San Vio to see these dark shapes in the water, like so many beached whales. In them the tourists they had swallowed, and could not disgorge. A barge blocked the passage and they wallowed, odorous, in the high tide of garbage. In the illuminated barge a sweaty tenor sang *O sole mio*. A lovely perfumed sight! Nothing moved but innumerable fans. Suddenly a voice cried, “Out! Out! Get me out!” An unmistakable voice. In a moment other ladies took up the cry. “Out! Out! Back! Back!” A few of the puzzled gondoliers complied. They backed their cargo to the cooler waters of the Grand Canal. As they passed beneath the bridge where we stood the gleam of malice brightened our eyes: with other natives we wanted to shout, “Female Yankee Go Home!”

Some citizens of Venice have slim pickings, but few slimmer than the junkman. For weeks, we found him something of a mystery. He

carried a sack. Always empty. At intervals he uttered a few glottal sounds. A few days ago, however, my wife saw him trundling off with some loot, the battered and rusty remains of a stove. Only when every alternative has been explored, is there something called *junk*.

We sometimes *think* we have some, but it never reaches the junkman. Dora, the cleaning woman, sees to that. We have been trained to salvage paper, bottles and cigarette butts. She doesn't smoke herself, but she knows people who do. Until one knows the Dora's of Venice the economy is something of a mystery—so few people seem to *do* anything, or have anything to do. One thing they do is never throw anything out. When my wife discovered that the $\frac{1}{2}$ liter bottle cost her more than the milk it contained, she too became a Dora: we now save everything. One of our prized possessions, recently lost, was a sardine can for storing grease. Dora nabbed it. So why don't we buy some more sardines? That's the easy way out, and we don't want Dora to think we're soft.

The native is not. This is seen most plainly in the conspicuous absence of beggars. There are a few. They are part of the Venetian community. Begging, without question, is a last resort, and as a last resort the community accepts it. In our quarter a few such men pass themselves off as entertainers. A joke. An openly countenanced joke. A moment of tuneless singing, a few plucked chords, then the passing of the hat. The most talented member of these sad deceivers has the least talent. No voice at all. He can play nothing. He cannot dance. He wears a pressed suit, shirt and tie, and looks for all the world like a respectable merchant. Two or three times a day, on the Zattere, depending on the turnout, he will take from his pocket a sheet of paper, place it before his nose, wag his head from side to side, and sing. Godot would love it. It would give him ideas. On occasion he says, "Now I'll sing," or mutters at the end, "That's that." Unhappily, this comical performance costs him much pain. He broods for hours. He smokes away his profits. He is under great strain. The effort it costs him would seem to exceed the handful of lire he ekes from his fans—which is what they become. No man in Venice, to our eyes, works so hard for what he gets.

The Venetian who wonders what the world is like can go to the Lido, or the thirty-first showing of the Biennale. The boat ride is beautiful, and costs him about ten cents. The Lido resembles a going resort on the Cape, the Jersey shore, or anywhere but Venice: electrified buses, quaint horse-drawn cabs, Fiats, Vespas, and Lincoln

Continentials. In this company the American car is still the world's standard of conspicuous waste. That someone has brought it *here* numbs the senses like hemlock. Americans who feel there is nothing in the world as tasteless and bizarre as Southern California might also take a second look at the Hotel Hungaria. This nightmare would make a good introduction to Peggy Guggenheim's Dada collection, illustrating what it was the rebellion was all about.

Relatively unobserved, and unequalled, is the little church of San Giorgio degli Schiavoni, with a series of paintings by Carpaccio. More a private chapel than a church, it is perfectly scaled for these celebrated paintings. Saint George slays the dragon on the wall facing Saint Jerome in his study, where he is watched by one of the world's immortal dogs. Some artists might well come here to pray, and many have. Outside, few stones have been turned in the streets where Carpaccio, Bellini, and other natives cleared their heads, and took a breath of fresh air, before going back to work.

In a piazza full of Germans who lost no weight while several million of their countrymen were being exterminated, the Venetian maintains a Swiss-like impartiality. The waiter who sees the tourist for the first time is inclined to say *Bitte*, or *Danke schön*. The German tourist still predominates and he is still very much the German tourist. It is an instance—in regard to the alien—of the Venetian's "Live and let live." The stranger meets no resistance, he has no barriers to overcome. Over the centuries the Venetian has seen *everything*, and it is currently on display in the Piazza. All he asks is that it doesn't rain.

At certain points on the Grand Canal the gondola serves as a ferry. As a rule the passengers stand, facing the opposite shore. Seated, they would be of little interest. Standing, the passengers are transformed into specters making the ferry crossing into Hades. Or out of it. Clearly, they face a judgment: prepare themselves to meet an end. The motions of the gondolier, the traffic on the canal, enhances their immobile aspect. Figures of wax or marble could not be more impassive. Something in their aspect, their posture, suggests weightlessness. I scan their faces for news that has escaped the rest of us.

At midnight, a scud of clouds over the moon, the sky no longer lit up with Festa fireworks, four sisters, in black habits, hooded, watched from the roof of a school bordering the canal. They leaned on the rail to see the last of the homebound revellers pass. Young

men singing, young women laughing, the sound of an oar, the mutter of voices. From where? Where I stood, spying, these sounds came from the lower world, all of them: the scene itself contradicted the familiar sentiment. What I knew or felt to be true was not the impression that the scene conveyed. The effect was not touching, or pathetic, but ominous. Black on the sky, motionless, silent, the Goya-like figures stood in judgment as the carefree sons and daughters of men made their way to hell. A moment later, closing the ceremony, the bells tolled the end of the Festa del Redentore.

If I stand under the clock tower, facing the sea, and look across the piazzetta toward the isle of San Giorgio, the fairy-tale world sometimes seen at the back of Carpaccio's paintings is visible. A liner may pass, closing off the stage like the movement of scenery from the wings, or a boat with painted sails from Chioggia. If the tri-color is flying from the staffs in the Piazza, the eye reels with the prospect. Over the choppy sea of heads, the tidal flow of the crowd, space arranges itself in a painterly manner. Within the same frame the picture changes, the light comes and goes. A maximum sense of spectacle, of theatre, is achieved without diminishing the smallest element present—the stature of man. He is in scale. He remains the unit of measurement. This may explain why the Piazza seems to lift the crowd to its own level, rather than overpower it, the more familiar effect of monuments. At night, while the band plays, the lights transform the real facades enclosing the Piazza into flat scene paintings appropriate to the operatic music on display. Neither modern vulgarity nor antique pomp reduce the scale of this impression. The Piazza, alone, seems the stage appropriate to the world it contains.

If there is a delinquent problem in Venice it goes by another name. So do policemen. They function as ornaments and guides. A *vecchia scuola* of purse snatchers, pocket-pickers, et cetera, maintains a long and dishonorable tradition, but it does not occur to me, in a dark alley, to turn and see who it is behind me. That will come, perhaps, but it is not yet here. Every citizen bolts and shuts his house as if preparing for a storm at sea, but on the street he does not worry about his head. Not yet. On festa days the streets are flooded with people, but not with crime. The packs of young men raise their voices, but little else. An American puzzled by this phenomenon is left with a familiar dilemma. The open—the wide open society—and the closed. After six months in the new world these boys, and girls, would change

their ways. In Venice invisible ties bind them to visible ways of living. This moral climate has little to do with morals, but a great deal to do with Venice. It is not an urban jungle. It is still a family community. The eye of God sees all, and in Venice it is still open. The freedoms of Venice are freedoms from, rather than for. From murder, death on the highway, the next Olympics, fallout-and-in shelters, cholesterol checkups, and that friendly visit from your insurance man.

That one might live in Venice—as some 400,000 do—is apt to be too wild a thought for the tourist to stomach. Isn't it unreal? Doesn't it seem out of this world? It does indeed. It is why we are here. Not as much out of this world as we would like, but we like what we can manage. *Time* magazine ticks at the kiosk, but the stones of Venice are slow to change. It is the citizen, not the city, that changes its face. But one does hear of much skulduggery underfoot. The tearing down of this, the building of that, with a skyway to bring the tourist to the Piazza. It means money, and the smell of money is in the air. And more. Just this week my wife came back from shopping with some stamps. For letters? No, these stamps were for free. An award, no less, a *regalo*, for merely buying something. I needn't tell you the color of these stamps, but I will. They were fresh spring green.

You should feel at home—and most Americans do. One said as much to me just the other night. You know what it's like, he said, and I did. It was like "old times." The good old late forties. We were in the Piazza, where a carefree crowd—the Piazza will make *most* crowds carefree—wandered about as if fearing they might find a way out. Bands played, and more Venetians than tourists sat drinking Coca Cola, or lapping up ice cream. Things were looking up—looking up in a familiar way. A veneer of affluence—never mind how thin—gives the city a shimmering gloss. It is what one sees in the shops. It is *all* one sees. A new breed of merchant princes stands in the wings. Their women dye their hair, walk their poodles, and their children threaten life on velocipedes. If Venice offers much that is new to the poodle, the poodle offers much that is new to Venice. And challenging. The great charm of this city is that man can saunter unmolested by Vespas, hotrods, and Ferraris—he can still saunter, but at his own risk. One weather eye had better be cocked on the stone at his feet. In the narrow alleys, the broad *fondamentas*, and across the brooks too broad for leaping, the uncurbed dog testifies to the new regime. With the poodle conspicuous waste comes to Venice.

Credit, that equalizer, is now available. In a shop few tourists will ever see, filled like a deep freeze with TV's and gadgets, an ornamental telephone, antique style, sells for eighty thousand lire. That's one hundred and thirty dollars, American. Cheaper decorator models sell for as little as thirty-five dollars. Does it seem a lot of money? *Signora, it's only four twenty a month.* A big-screen TV will cost her just double that.

A young friend of mine, a Venetian, who came up after the war the hard way, now runs a cafe with modern paintings by his friends on the walls. It is a family enterprise. Hard work is now paying off. We sat in the garden discussing how much and how little Venice has changed. Some things had not. Some things never would. We sat a moment silent, and then he told me he would like to tell me something I would not believe. And what was that? He had just bought a car. A new car, the very latest thing in a Fiat. Did he think *I* would find that strange? I asked. But I didn't understand, he said. It was not merely that he had bought this car: he had paid for this car, on the spot, with a check. He had written out a check for one million five hundred thousand lire, and signed it. Imagine? No, he knew I could not imagine that. No American could. We all had too much money to understand that.

I had never signed a check for a million lire, but I knew what it was to shoot the works. And for a car. To shoot the works. Something of this spirit is in the air. Not just this young man. This was not the carefree gesture of a lucky fellow, but one that had an entire family behind it—ten years of frugal living and saving go into the sum. Why a *car*? He tells me it will help bring the family together. There are folks in the country. His father and mother are no longer young. The good life is an easier life. But the spring of this action lies elsewhere, in the dream of which the car is the symbol, and the climate of the time that inspires men to shoot the works.

To keep a car in Venice is like keeping a boat somewhere else—the shooting does not stop with the purchase price. Space in the new city garage will cost most owners as much as their apartments. But like a good perplexed American, my friend smiles and shrugs. What the hell! Money is only money. One only lives once.

These sentiments, like the cigarettes he smokes, the jazz he likes, the drinks he makes, are all imported from the young country. The brave new world, of which Europe is the parent, is now the parent of what is new in Europe. The positions are reversed. The current flows the other way. It is why the tourist, even in Venice, will feel a puzzling

sense of *déjà vu*. Not so much in what he sees, as in what he feels. A sense of having been here before—and indeed he has. Mass culture—that unwieldy offspring of which Americans are the ill at ease parents—is here in its promising, school-tie phase. No one has ever heard of Richard Halliburton. No one wants to hear about Lindbergh. That is for the birds. The taste is *popular* taste. Two or three times a day my neighbor's cockeyed daughter plays a rock and roll version of *Ave Maria*, much enjoyed by everybody in the neighborhood. Once a day she plays and sings a version of *the tweeest*. Is she too *far out*? Quite the contrary. She is in the swing. She has no interest in a taste of her own—what she wants is *the* taste.

A few days ago Frank Sinatra gave a charity concert in Paris—the reporter for the Paris *Herald* described him as the Caruso of our time. Not in jest. As reporters sometimes are, he was right. *Our* time. *Our* time now times the globe. The revolution we hardly knew we were fighting, whose meaning still escapes us, has been won without melting plowshares into swords. The melting down that matters has been in matters of taste. Popular taste is the taste that is popular. Here in Venice, this fallout summer, Americans float on the Grand Canal listening to a tenor evoke the Italian past. Tourists and natives alike would rather that he sang *Ciao! Ciao! Bambina*. Soon he will.

That the gondola tour, like the tunnel of Love, will terminate at an express stop on the subway is a sensation that even Venetians may have. One is both in and out of this world. The *vaporetto* snorts and coughs as it pulls in for a landing, where several natives sit discussing the atomic bomb. The weather, that is. *La bomba atomica* being the cause of it. There was no spring in Venice, all May it was November, and now in July there are hot and cold spells. Like a patient with a fever. That is what it is like. It can only be explained by *la bomba atomica*.

The weather, too, this summer, has a made-in-USA air, and the air may show a certain touch of pollution, linking Venice, life and death, to the rest of the world. Increasingly, we shall all be tourists here together, some on the European plan, some on the American plan, some without any plan except to try and last it out. That will not be easy, with the rising prices, but by saving green stamps and eating instant potatoes—by being *echt* American, that is, it may work. We're the people, after all, who taught the world how to shoot the works.

Wright Morris

GORKY AND HISTORY: AN EXCHANGE

Paul Goodman's review of my book on Arshile Gorky (*PR*, Summer 1962) is actually a counter-statement on the relation of the artist to history, except that Goodman did not understand my side of the discussion and his presentation of it consisted of some half-gnawed quotations left over from gobbling up my book into his thesis. But anything that Goodman does not understand is worth further examination.

Not that my account of Gorky's development was so complicated; there was really no need for Goodman to discover in it the operation of a "double dialectic." Both the complexity and the dialectic arise rather from Goodman's attitude toward history. This attitude is indeed amazing. Goodman conceives the history of our time as unreal, or as real only negatively; and then he finds that there is another history, the real one, which he doesn't describe but which has to do, I suspect, with noble events chosen by him out of the entire past. Rosenberg, he complains, "takes the crazy details of current history too seriously as real history." To understand this criticism you do need a double dialectic: one for what actually happens and one for what is real. You might even find a third dialectic handy, to choose what is serious in the "crazy details" and what is comical in the real history.

For Goodman's next statement is even more startling than his theory of the two histories. The crazy details, though not serious, may have consequences fatal to mankind: "they are," writes Goodman, "real enough in that they may do us in, but they do not much recommend themselves for humane discourse." Current history may kill us but it can't interest us. Nor can it influence the artist. Fate and action are in one bin, intellect and art in another. Goodman demonstrates at City Hall as a war resister, but real history is whatever he chooses to talk about, as in the "historical" confabulations of *The Empire City*. I wonder if Goodman realizes that in this split between fact and discourse his classicism has come very close to mere academic idealism.

But if it was a mistake to think that the history of the twenties

through the thirties influenced Gorky, how about *real* history? Did that influence him? Goodman doesn't say. Gorky was not in the range of his humane discourse—and, in fact, doesn't seem to interest him very much.

Through his gift of the "double dialectic"—i.e., my dealing with Gorky as responsive to history and dealing with him as an artist—Goodman generously tries to share with me his view of the double reality and while so doing to clarify me a bit, as they used to say on the Left. Besides my mistake about current history, I take current art too seriously as the art of our time, but when, says Goodman, I discuss Gorky's best work I "really treat all this as mythology" and present Gorky as "quite outside of *that* history and very much like the artist of any age." (Goodman's italics) Thus, according to Goodman, I am contradicting myself—either art or history ought to be kept out. But my contradictions are true and wise, because in bringing in this mess of contemporary history and contemporary art by which I am taken in, I am describing, all unawares, "the paradox of being trapped and therefore representative and indeed existing at all, and of escaping and becoming one's self and realizing some value." In other words, the history of the twentieth century is the mask of an eternal psychological drama, and while I failed to see through the mask and thus dealt with it as the real thing, I did touch on the drama, which was the same for Gorky as for Giotto.

Well, that's telling me what I think but it is not telling the reader what I said. In my book, there was only one history, *that* one, and no artist "quite outside of that history." Real or unreal, seriously or seriously in quotes, dialectically and comically, the history was the history of our time, in whatever degree that history absorbs, repeats, fulfills or negates past history. Gorky and his contemporaries were stuck with it and the artist at any point of his creative effort was stuck with its art; neither Gorky nor his paintings ever got out of either.

I wrote of Gorky as a man stuck with the history and the art of our time and *conscious of being stuck*. There are two ways of giving effect to this consciousness. The first way is to attempt to figure out history's next move—this was the spirit of the thirties in its political ideology and in its rationalized approaches to art. The second way is to discard the ideology of the next move and to trust to action or to the unhindered gesture to evoke the new out of the unknown—this was the spirit of the War period, with its abandonment of "ultimate objectives," which has survived the Cold War years. Gorky tried both ways, first one then the other, each in "the right time" (that is—since

Goodman questions what "right time" means—going along with the rationalizing effort and shifting at the moment when that way had been collectively exhausted). Thus Gorky's history was "exemplary." But the important thing is that *in both phases*, Gorky was responding to historical actuality with historical consciousness and intention.

Goodman makes much of my inability to "unite the two strands" of history and art in Gorky's career. One may gather from the above that no such uniting was necessary, since there was no separation—again, the problem is Goodman's, not mine. Gorky's career was linked simultaneously to political and social history and to esthetic experiment by the problem of *location*. The drama of this refugee from war and from famine is entirely a drama, almost a saga, of self-placement; in this drama all of his intellectual and emotional powers came into play.

The consciousness of being stuck with, or in, history is simply outside of Goodman's comprehension. For him, as we have seen, the actual historical moment is unreal or unserious, and to feel hedged in by this unreality or triviality is to be the victim of an illusion that needs to be translated into a more basic symbolism of traps, *e.g.*, the womb.

But how can one who denies or displaces Gorky's anxious consciousness grasp the tension of his thought? Even if Goodman were right about history, his impatience with determinism would make him wrong about Gorky. Not that it is necessary to agree with the artist in his feeling about history. But it is necessary to respect that feeling as a fact and not brutally to substitute for it one's own ideas of what the "real fact" is. After all, the critic has not, like the head doctor, been called in to straighten anyone out to that extent.

Nor does the problem of self-location exist for Goodman. It did exist, but Goodman long ago solved it to his own satisfaction. It is his great creative feat, in fact, and the mark of his own pioneering intelligence, that back in the thirties he consciously situated himself in a Manhattan set within a combination of semi-real Nature and a fiction of Athens, and that within this symbolically transformed environment he established, discovered, or pretended to discover a "community" of friends and disciples, the "humane discourse" about whom overlay the "crazy details" of current history in *The Empire City*. But what Goodman has done he cannot understand other people failing to do. Gorky, with far fewer social, intellectual, symbolic and psychological resources, had to keep searching for a spot, on the map and in the human world—it was to this end that he sought to decipher the history of painting as

if it were the code in *The Gold Bug*. Gorky had come to New York, but for an artist in those days New York was the wrong spot; the real spot was Paris.* The struggle for location, which was the connection between Gorky and history, thus provided the meaning for him of the fall of Paris and the arrival in New York of the exiled surrealists: by being and working there, they authenticated New York for Gorky—in commenting on this dramatic relationship, it is presumptuous of Goodman to introduce his opinions of Breton and Matta as “international hipsters”; no one claimed that they influenced *Goodman*.

Goodman lacks the dramatic imagination required to visualize the outlines of another's life, as formed by his limitations and the dilemmas that arise out of those limitations, and to apprehend the particular genius by which he surmounts them (when he does surmount them) and the anguish in which he sinks under their weight. Goodman is a sage with answers; he is weak on problems. Thus he reduces the concrete drama of Gorky's struggle with place, time and human environment, the conditions of his creative leap, to the mush of “the artist's mature liberation in terms of his temporarily good marriage, getting a decent income [Gorky never got a decent income] and a little public acceptance [Gorky had just as much public acceptance in the thirties but by different people, and it was the difference that counted for him] also his rage of jealousy and fear of oncoming death [by the time of Gorky's cancer operation his new style has been in full development for five or six years] for these are the things that free us from obsessional self-consciousness and give the real self a chance to breathe.”

In sum, Goodman demands that we discard as “fancy psychologizing” the exploration of Gorky's thought and experience, his development through conflict with the strangeness of his time and place and with the hard issues of influence and originality, and accept instead some abstractions of therapeutic psychology. History and the artist are to be kept firmly apart. As flippartly as he dismisses from serious “discourse” the facts that may do us in, he announces that he is “profoundly unimpressed” by the human and cultural crisis (the War and the conquest of France by Hitler) through which the personal-historical complex of Gorky and other artists underwent transformation and ushered in a new period in American painting.

For Goodman the only choice in regard to current history is either

* Since this was true for American artists generally, the wrong spot was the right spot in terms of the change that was to take place in American painting.

to paralyze oneself by "role playing" in it or to ignore it. Once Gorky shook off the error of asking "What next?" he had, according to Goodman, no longer anything to do with history and became "an artist of any age." The fact is, however, that Gorky's later paintings were both far more expressive of their time than the earlier ones and far richer in historical content—this content was described in detail in my analysis of his painting, *The Diary of a Seducer*, but Goodman, overlooking "the crazy details," read this analysis as a demonstration of "classical art theory." Being mesmerized by the idea of solving the historical riddle had actually kept Gorky "out of history," as it did to a large extent the American Marxists. Once he renounced this effort, he was able to recognize that he already was in history and to act as one who belonged there. André Breton communicated this sense of proprietorship of history very powerfully, and its effect on Gorky's confidence was incalculable. By ceasing to push for the next step, Gorky arrived at it, the irony being that had he not pushed so hard the door would not have opened when he stepped back.

Goodman is, of course, aware of these processes, but only when they take place in his own laboratory. It horrifies him to think of history sitting on someone's back and frustrating his solutions. It offends him almost as much to think of history shoving someone *toward* solutions. It is not only that Goodman is opposed to willed roles, he wishes to deny also imposed roles, the world of tragic struggle and irony. He wishes to deny as unreal any power not emanating from within the individual and which cannot be controlled by inner movements—you relax and things relax. This assumption of total freedom is not only Utopian, it leads a daring soul to primitive magic. Inside yourself (on good days, that is) "solutions" occur that way. And "humane discourse" ought to have a good dose in it of the consoling belief that things so happen too in the world.

But Utopianism and magic won't do as a means for understanding the lives of others. *They* live in situations made up of details, including the nutty ones. *They*—dammit—live in determinism; *they* have to fight it out with imposed limitations; for *them* the Chinese Emperor's Easy Way is not a sure formula. *They* are in history; if not their whole ("real") selves, then their actions, including the actions of painting pictures or composing book reviews. For all his classical wishes, Goodman's own good work is not achieved outside "*that*" history.

Harold Rosenberg

A REPLY

I meant to say simply that what is on the front page is not usually history. Marx even said that human history had not yet begun, but I think several interesting changes have occurred since neolithic times. (Nothing to do with eternity or Athens.) And it is of course a commonplace, and true, that the art-act is more in touch with history than the journalistic report. When Gorky, in Harold Rosenberg's phrase, which he fails to repeat in his letter, was "content to comb the beaches where passion and esthetic memories meet," he did, according to Harold, his best painting and he was, according to me, most in history. I tend to think that Gorky's "historical consciousness" in the thirties was about on the level of A. MacLeish's or the editors' of PR. The proliferation of news media has created a fast amount of such "consciousness." If our present statesmen destroy us all, the historical interest of that event will not be the shambles but the secular development of human folly to such a climax and, even more grippingly, the secular development of the catatonic rigidity with which we are now not preventing it.

I agree immensely with Harold about the relevance of "Action" and the "gesture to evoke the new." Let me explore what this implies in writing a book review. (*I was not painting a picture, nor writing a biography of Gorky who—Harold is right—was not my dish of tea.*) Action is a motion not in isolation but into the immediate future, and for literary articles the "immediate" means a framework of thoughts to work with tomorrow. (The immediate of tonight is hopefully not literary, or at least it is poetry not articles.) So my task, in our stuck world, is to open the possibility of "sage answers," of practical good sense that might prove itself and become real history. Naturally my products might be *merely* mythological, that's the risk I take. As Harold knows, I am weak on "problems," on the thorny conditions of life, not because I am unaware of them; I have been as balked and disgusted as the average. But when these problematic conditions are posed, as almost universally nowadays, to add up to a proof that Nothing Can Be Done, then they bore me and my pen begins to scratch blanks. Rather, I assert solutions *anyway*, as you slap a drunk with a towel; you do not describe his state and how he got that way. What is our attitude when our friends act as stupidly as Harold's Current History? To be sure, this mentality of mine would make me a poor biographer of Gorky, but Harold was the biographer; I was reviewing Harold, who is bright.

To put it another way: in a generous review of a recent book of mine, Harold praised me as a Citizen. Alas, this means not only City Hall Park but the almost weekly drudgery of being a convention bum for do-good causes, the hang-ups of the School Board, vainly badgering the City Planning Commission, and trying to get those “disciples” to act in community rather than goofing off. I hope this is all action in real history; but I cannot know, except that indeed I do it. So I also write a book-review as a Citizen, to shake Harold and his deserved admirers out of a now deadening historicity mesmerized by gigantic Forces, and back into our modest history-making.

Paul Goodman

We are pleased to announce that beginning with the next issue Robert Motherwell will serve as art consultant for PR.

SALINGER'S AUDIENCE: AN EXPLANATION

'Lord Jesus Christ have mercy on me.' I mean that's what it is. . . . Anyway, the staretts tell the pilgrim that if you say the prayer over and over again . . . then eventually what happens, the prayer becomes self-active.

—from *Franny*

. . . I found out a good many years back practically all I need to know about *my* general reader; that is to say, *you*, I'm afraid. . . . You're a great bird-lover.

—from *Seymour: An Introduction*

Being neither staret nor bird-lover, I find myself somewhat excluded from the immense circle of J. D. Salinger's admirers, and more than ready to admit that he writes for a special (or even, as he might say, Special) kind of reader, and that it is his sensitivity to the needs of this special reader that has sustained his book of two short stories at the top of the best-seller list. It seems probable that Salinger's audience is composed mostly of college-educated white-collar Americans, since that group makes up the largest part of the trade book reading public. I have observed both in conversation and in the violent letters which appear wherever a reviewer has the temerity to hint that Salinger may not, after all, be the greatest writer of our time, that Salinger's fans defend him with a remarkable intensity, as though they were defending themselves, their ways of life, and their sensitivity as people and as readers. The slick magazine world treats Salinger as though he were some sort of divinity. *Time*, for instance, reports that "His face, after six years of struggle, shows the pain of an artistic battle whose outcome still cannot be seen. The battle surely involves the matter of Seymour's sainthood and suicide." In fact, *Time* finds ". . . broad hints, for those who care to take them, that Salinger has set himself to writing an American *Remembrance of Things Past*."

The real and pressing needs to which Salinger responds so naturally have been created by the current plight of the educated middle-class American family. It all begins with Daddy, who doesn't feel quite loved enough. He doesn't feel loved enough because he doesn't respect himself. He doesn't respect himself because he's not doing any useful work. Sure, Daddy gets in the car or on the train each morning and goes down to Madison Avenue or some equivalent place and makes the wheels turn; but the trouble is that those turning wheels don't move anything except each other. Daddy feels trapped and unmanly. He's caught in a world he never made, and when confronted with its problems yearns to be a child again and blame everything on the big people.

Daddy's first line of defense against his feelings of helplessness and *emptiness is his family*. He tries to draw his family around him like a cloak, lavishing love and delicacy on the children, offering up his whole life so that his loved ones might redeem it for him. But Daddy's big effort fails (and as testimony to his failure we are now getting a deluge of unhappy suburban marriage novels). How can the kids respect Daddy when Daddy can't respect himself? The kids are confused; they would like to be dependent on Mommy & Daddy and here Mommy & Daddy are dependent on them. They want to watch what Daddy does to see what's interesting about being a grown-up and alive, but Daddy is ashamed of what he does and doesn't like to talk about it. The kids are under pressure: they've got the whole family riding on their backs. How can they learn to make adult decisions when all adult decisions are made in terms of *them*?

The *child-centeredness of the new American suburban family* creates a new social hierarchy. Since adults have abnegated their power to children, it is in practice more desirable to be a child. And since an older child has certain advantages over a younger, the child's power and satisfaction in life increase as he grows older—right up to that age when he is forced to enter the world of adults. Consequently the oldest child, the teenager, is king of American society. Because he spends billions of dollars each year in the consumer market, he expects that market to be tailored to his tastes—as witness the current offerings in clothes, music, cars, newspapers, entertainment and politicians.

Naturally the teenager is loathe to relinquish his topdog position, and to prolong it will even submit to a college education. What else is there to do, anyway? Once at college, the teenager is immediately absorbed into new and improved families of youth, called fraternities,

sororities, clubs, etc., which have nothing to do with approaching adulthood but everything to do with preserving the sanctity of the child. Here are all the games and rites of Tom Sawyer & Co. solemnly enacted by people who have enjoyed physical maturity for two to six years. The result is a deliberately cut-off and enclosed Youth Culture, which as a matter of principle has nothing to do with the society that supports it. And indeed, why should our college students show any concern for contemporary social problems, when they can tell from the aura of approval that surrounds them that they play an indispensable role in our society by reason of their very existence? For the fact is that—with the exception of a small, Dean-plaguing minority—American college youth is the purest-yet embodiment of our National Dream: a leisure class involved with nothing but *Having Fun*. Small wonder that once out of school the jealous alumnus fights all his life to get back to the same position.

And, it seems, to the same family. For the Youth family is in many respects merely an improved version of the family that Daddy has created in the suburbs. The nice thing about the Youth family is that Mommy & Daddy have been eliminated: there is no pressure to put content into your parents' lives or to justify the unasked-for sacrifices they have made for you. There is simply a group of peers, your honorary brothers and sisters, who value you as an individual and give you a role to play—even if only so that you can do the same in turn for them. They are not judging you, nor do they have any stake in your adult achievement: they are willing to love you for your image alone.

But in our society every silver lining has its cloud of guilt, and even our young adventurers are not unconscious of the crisis which cannot be indefinitely postponed. For they are mindful of Daddy, mindful of graduation, harrassed by exams and classes—all warning that good things must come to an end and when they do one is expected to pay for them. How easy it is, then, to surrender to the identification that Salinger offers: to become an honorary member of his Glass family, where not only are you loved for yourself alone but where each of your loving brothers and sisters is a brilliant and talented instance of one of your own (undeveloped) secret resources. To young adults born in the late thirties it is a dream-come-true merely to have many brothers and sisters, rather than one or none. And there are no pressures, expectations, demands in the Glass family—oh, some rivalry and resentment, to be sure—but mainly the honorary brother or sister finds himself vicariously surrounded by loving peers,

intent on each drop of "perspiration" that appears on his troubled face. Unlike the cold cold world—or even the Youth Culture—the Glass family is a realm where there is no danger of one's very own emotions slipping by unnoticed or unappreciated.

As the college student feels time running out on him, there is a terrible temptation to rebel, to welsh payment on the leisure he's had, to say "All right, then, I'll go to hell!" but that's Huck Finn talking, not Holden Caulfield. Salinger's stories are designed for the vast majority who must somehow expunge such temptation, for those who are instinctively aware that they lack the will to take on the world and make their own value in it (how could they, considering Daddy?). The problem for these tempted ones is somehow to turn down the painful alternative of rebellion without admitting (even to themselves) that they are exactly like everyone else. The solution lies in a safe rebellion through some Special consumption of high culture, and for innocents like these, Salinger is Gautama, Lao-tse, Shankaracharya, Hui-neng and Sri Ramakrishna rolled into one.

For Salinger offers no difficult visions; he's guaranteed not to disturb. He permits his reader to eat his cake and have it too—secure in the knowledge that he deserves better cake, but there is none to be had. Salinger is not concerned with genuine (or at least, possible) alternatives to the values and life-styles he deplors. His technique for handling the individual vs. society situation is simply to divide the world between the sensitive few and the vulgar many. You, my reader, he assures us, belong to an elite—not because you want to live differently, but because you are sensitive. You have religious experiences, you have special affinities with little girls, you can't stand phonies, you *understand*. You are so sensitive it's a wonder you can go on. In fact, Salinger implies, *you are a hero and your heroism is not based on heroic action but on mere existence*.

It is logical then, perfectly logical, that Seymour the Saint should have married an ordinary, vulgar, grasping woman. He was merely accepting that burden which all Salinger readers must accept, the unutterable deadness of the organization-man society. Since they are sensitive, they see through the game they are playing, and they suffer. But that doesn't mean they want to do anything about it. They are at their best when they simply go on with it; because ultimately it is the path of all-knowing acceptance that leads to *satori* and a glimpse of the godhead. Naturally there are severe crises on the path to serenity, and when they come it is doubly handy to be an honorary Glass, and to revel in the comfort of long special letters from Buddy

Glass, or a whole day in the living room fighting with Zooey Glass via an orgy of significant fidgets. The letters and the fights serve to reassure them: *You are unique. Not everyone is a bird-lover. When you go to the Princeton weekend, or to the class where the professor musses up his hair, or to Miami Beach (or to the office where the phonies work at phoney jobs), it will be not just an ordinary event in the life of an ordinary man, but the test of a secret saint.*

Seymour, of course, didn't quite make it. He had his one last great moment with a four-year-old girl and then blew his brains out in the bedroom of his Miami Beach honeymoon hotel. Thus Seymour represents the paradox of the most saintly: they are too good for this world. Seymour is meant to be an emblem of suffering for all of us: he was so acutely sensitive that he could not go on living. But, paradoxically, it was just this fatal sensitivity that enabled him to leave behind the vital Salinger message: "*—don't you know who that Fat Lady really is? . . . Ah, buddy. Ah, buddy. It's Christ Himself. Christ Himself, buddy.*" And so Zooey must shine his shoes for that radio show, because the insensitive slob he entertains is really Christ Himself. Seymour died that we might have this redemption.

This is a message Daddy can accept. When he was young perhaps he had some ideals worth fighting and worth living for. But these soft times are hard, and now, sadly, Daddy is content merely to lie still as Franny on that fabulous couch in the Glass living room and—before falling into a deep, dreamless sleep—to smile at the ceiling. Yes, Daddy knows Seymour personally: the really brilliant kid in the old frathouse. So brilliant in fact that he couldn't bear to take any courses. Flunked out, and ended up on skid row, where only the Special few know that this shabby alcoholic is the wisest man on earth. One day on his lunch hour Daddy brings his youngest daughter down to the Bowery. Seymour kneels carefully, takes the little girl and holds her at arm's length. His eyes sparkle. He stares at his unshined shoes and sighs a deep deep sigh, mumbles a few words of the Mundaka Upanishad. He looks up at Daddy, and by the perspiration on Seymour's forehead Daddy senses that Seymour is about to speak. (To him, Daddy!) "Ah buddy, buddy," says Seymour. "Don't you realize who that Agency is? Ah, buddy. It's Christ Himself, buddy."

Tenderly Daddy takes his little daughter in his arms, and trudges away through the gently falling shit. He is renewed. He will endure. May the Lord Jesus Christ have mercy on him.

Jeremy Lerner

BOOKS

THE REWARDS OF SERIOUSNESS

UTOPIAN ESSAYS AND PRACTICAL PROPOSALS. By Paul Goodman.
Random House. \$5.00.

Brilliant or drab, right or wrong, Paul Goodman's essays are marked by a seriousness which sets them apart from most of the "social criticism" written by Americans during the last two decades. He has resigned himself neither to passivity nor prosperity; he refuses the role of a tolerated "constructive" critic; he believes that men can still act upon their desires and that such action must sooner or later bring them into conflict with the established system. Old-fashioned Utopian, cheerful romantic, far younger than most writers half his age, he still hopes to rouse, incite, stir.

Goodman's essays are serious because they proceed from an intellectual center that has been earned through decades of work. There is a coherent set of libertarian ideas in everything he writes, whether it is an analysis of urban congestion or sterility in work, an examination of the literary avant garde or the new moods among college students. In valuing this sustained devotion to libertarianism, I am not trying to suggest that there is a special virtue in "position-taking"; by now we all know how quickly that can harden into a disdain for thought. But there is a virtue in considering and caring for one's intellectual past, even when one wishes to correct or partly disavow it, and there is even more of a virtue in regarding an intellectual career as a history, an organic development from premises of belief which sustain, even as they allow for modification of, a writer's work. Goodman is today more tacit and flexible in his anarchism, and somewhat less dogmatic in his Reichianism, than he was twenty years ago; yet it is important that the writer of fifty retain some deep ties with the writer he was at thirty. Such an organic development is admirable not merely for its intrinsic comeliness, but also because it provides some protection against

those twists and turns, those frenetic pursuits of novelty, which have characterized so many intellectual careers of the past few decades.

Goodman continues to write as if it were still possible to move people: perhaps not sufficiently or in sufficient numbers, yet with some sense that speech retains a power. The action toward which he points is not necessarily a parading in the streets, though that too when it is necessary; it can be an action within the intellectual world or among friends or wherever people, coming together, retain a concern for something beyond ego or career. For Goodman the value of this perspective, apart from its rightness, is that it enforces a certain discipline upon his work. It keeps his writing from slipping into the merely *brilliant*, that mode of display which attracts writers who have prominence but not influence; and it preserves the valuable assumption—which through persistence and courage he has made come true—that there is an audience out there listening to what we say.

Most of the social criticism written in the last twenty years has been sharp and informative in detail, but toothless in its larger approaches, which is why it has been so popular among middle-brow readers who want to be moved without having to move. Another kind of criticism, prevalent in *Partisan Review*, *Commentary*, and other advanced journals, is frequently bold in speculation and clever in local insights, but without any visible objective goal or intent: such writing has a way of declining into a narcissistic exercise, providing amusement for a coterie audience which survives after the intellectual coterie that had brought it into existence has disappeared. If you ask a sophisticated reader what he admires in Mary McCarthy's essays, his answer will probably be, "why, she's brilliant"—which she certainly is; but I don't imagine anyone is likely to associate Miss McCarthy with an idea. Some time ago Isaac Rosenfeld spoke about "wisdom without thesis—the inexpensive kind," and that, in the name of a free play of intellect, is what we have gotten from most intellectuals these past years. Often very good, it is not good enough. By contrast, Paul Goodman tries for something more, and frequently achieves it. His mannerisms, like those of many "minority writers," can be annoying, his ego is decidedly visible, but finally it is his thought, his convictions to which one must respond.

Because he writes with respect for both the idea of history and the idea of an intellectual career, Goodman uses the essay in a somewhat tentative and improvisatory way. None of his pieces stands entirely alone; each of them picks up ideas he first ventured years ago, or seems to wait for a further development in the future. Several of his

pieces about "Utopian thinking" have occasioned an admiring fuss among some younger writers who now seem a little depressed at looking back upon their political "realism" during the post-war years; actually, what they find so startling in Goodman has been there all along, part of his continuous development as an anarchist writer.

The single best essay in the book, "On the Intellectual Inhibition of Grief and Anger," provides evidence of this continuity, but also evidence of Goodman's growth as a writer. The essay is a delicate probing of psychic troubles common among intellectuals. Goodman's gift is here an unusual one: a gift for the precise, detached yet sympathetic description of states of feeling we all experience but seldom reflect upon. He describes "persons who have appetites, who show initiative in approaching and possessing their objects and are therefore subject to frustration and loss, but who cannot give way to anger and grief because they know too much." By "rising above the situation" too easily, the intellectual "draws back from the feeling of loss and explains it, and lets his grief dribble away." These observations Goodman then develops with a notable candor, sweetness and plasticity.

None of the other essays seems quite as good, though some, like the study of the American avant garde and the piece on pornography, are packed with enough observations to yield tomes for other writers. Uneven this collection certainly is, as all such collections must be; but why complain of that? Good writers have a right, perhaps an obligation, to show their strengths and weaknesses in their true interdependence.

Some of the weaknesses have become part of Goodman's public stance, the price he pays for the isolation confronting the radical writer in our society. Though less often than in the past, he falls back upon his chosen role of the Artist-Sage, the wise and contemplative daddy of us all, supervising the kiddies in the sand-box. As a Sage, Goodman cannot allow his temper to run away with him (cf., "On the Intellectual Inhibitions," etc.) and this means that sometimes he fails to achieve the polemical thrust his politics requires. The Sage can, however, permit himself slap-dash, apparently unrevised prose: perhaps it is an aggression against the audience which does not always recognize his sagacity. By now, the whole idea of the Sage is a bore, and one that Goodman can afford to drop.

He might also consider dropping the didactic strategy he has worked out in this book. He begins with the enunciation of neglected common truths and values. "When I suggest a practical proposal plain as the nose on your face, people weep with pleasure for the reminder of paradise lost" (I believe that, entirely). He then proceeds to show that

in order to achieve these proposals, it is necessary to turn to a politics usually dismissed as "Utopian." Now this strategy has its obvious persuasive power, and Goodman employs it skillfully; but I can't help thinking that it also involves some corner-cutting, for the truth is that the transition from step to step in his argument is more difficult and uncertain than he acknowledges. And except in moments of argument, he knows this perfectly well.

At times Goodman seems wilfully fixed into an habitual commitment: as when he rightly enough protests the imprisonment of Wilhelm Reich but refrains from considering the damaging practical consequences that may have followed from Reich's venture into cancer therapy. Equally important, he gets into difficulties because of his concern with the idea of community, his wish to reestablish authentic human ties through improved social arrangements. He lacks the appreciation for the creative uses and protective advantages of "rootlessness" which a writer like Harold Rosenberg has. Indeed, so intense is his yearning for the fulfillment of our "societal impulses" that he can advance a proposal like work camps for the young without adequately considering that in practise—in the practise of the existing society—they can easily become semi-military, authoritarian institutions.

At the moment, Goodman's stock is high among the minority of thoughtful students, and that is as it should be. His combination of intellectual range, human concern and radical persistence has made him a valuable figure in American letters. The weaknesses and foibles are there, of course, open to the mockery of people who have not shown a fraction of his courage or gift. But the point to be stressed at the moment is the firmness with which he has stood by his ideas through decades of work. He is one of a vanishing company, the free intellectual, and I think myself that it is one of the best things in the world to be.

Irving Howe

LES SEQUESTRES D'ALTONA. By Jean-Paul Sartre.

Jean-Paul Sartre's newest play, *Les Séquestrés d'Altona*, which opened in Paris in September 1959, brought Sartre rapidly out of the literary eclipse into which he had fallen in France since the post-war vogue of existentialism. Yet although Ionesco's *The Rhinoceros*, which appeared in France the same year and was there considered a much lesser play, has long since become a domestic American animal, *Les Séquestrés* remains virtually unknown. Knopf brought out a good translation (as *The Condemned of Altona*) in March 1961; no one noticed.

It may be too much to expect that Broadway should produce such a fascinating and difficult play; but why should it go unread amongst us?

Sartre, it seems, was dropped from the contemporary American intellectual canon with the coming of Beckett, Ionesco, and the American beats. Even earlier, the more readily digestible humanism and comparative humility of Albert Camus (and perhaps his more acceptable political views) had made America adopt Camus as the more suitable interpreter for its youth of the heritage of the last war. Camus was the intellectual "most likely to succeed" in creating a viable neo-Christian ethic for the cold war-exacerbated immaturity of our American conscience. Thus America mis-read *The Fall* as a statement of movement toward religious faith—naively projecting its own hopes and insecurities into Camus' acid satire of the Christian belief that confession absolves. Camus' work lent itself to this sort of easy mis-reading. "We must not be afraid to love," Camus seemed to say, a statement with which few would disagree; and, agreeing, young America hurried out to sign petitions protesting nuclear tests and capital executions or to rejoin the church, easily reassured of good faith.

Les Séquestrés d'Altona will not bring such facile comfort. The reader of this play will not find himself absolved simply through a moment of repentant self-recognition. Although Sartre intended the play at the time most immediately as a comment on France's conduct in Algeria, with which Sartre and other French intellectuals were to become deeply involved a year later with the Jeanson trial and the *Declaration on the Right to Insubordination in the Algerian War*, he means his analysis of contemporary motives and actions to carry far beyond the current French situation. As the damnation of the hero Frantz (note the near homonymy with *la France*) accumulates, he avows, "Je suis

l'Homme . . . je suis tout homme et tout l'Homme, je suis le Siècle, comme n'importe qui." With Frantz, we are all guilty from the opening of the play of some undetermined crime, and find out only as the play progresses and our past, the past of the century, accumulates on the stage, just what it is of which we are guilty. When the play ends we may be able to limit our own personal involvement in its guilt, but we will not be able to exclude it; part of us goes with Frantz to his final assertion of his guilt through self-destruction.

Les Séquestrés d'Altona is set in present-day Germany. The story, to abbreviate (and necessarily mutilate) is that of a torturer who is only now coming face to face with his guilt. Frantz, to hide from his past, has secluded himself on the family estate since war's end, seeing no one, and living in a world of fantasy he has created himself. In this fantasy world he absolves his own crimes by believing that the conquering Allies are perpetrating an even more horrendous crime: "the systematic extermination of the German people." By a sort of moral relativism, the Germans, in the face of this coming crime, are "innocent before the enemy." Frantz denies that the German leaders alone should be considered responsible for the Nazi crimes; for the people to deny their leaders would be to admit the guilt did exist. Frantz denies the guilt by hypothesizing the relatively greater guilt of the conquerors (read: the Moslems) against which all that the Germans (or: the French in Algeria) had previously done would seem to have been in the interest of legitimate self-defense. In the end, with the destruction of his fantasy, Frantz finds that Germany in truth prospers and that his crimes are unabsolved. He then realizes that, even though all he had done in a futile search for personal freedom of action had been in the illusory role of the man of power in which his father had created him, still he has in his life committed one act for which the individual himself must bear responsibility without possible redemption: the destruction of the human existence of another through torture—"changing a man into vermin while he's still living."

This deliberate destruction of the human will of another is the one action in the Sartrean ethic from which the individual cannot redeem himself. Under any other circumstances the individual, once he accepts the truth of his past, is able to assert his individual freedom and recreate himself and his life. Thus, the murders of Orestes in *Les Mouches* are actions for which there is no meaning other than that which Orestes himself gives to them. They are crimes if he chooses to feel guilt for them; they are not crimes if he recognizes them as his past but refuses

to let them determine or limit his freedom of action for the future. But for Frantz to accept his past and deny guilt for it would be to assert that torture, like murder, may at times be a justified act of opposition to the inequities of the world. Frantz shows a final heroism in recognizing his past—escaping from the “bad faith” with which he had concealed it from himself—and then dying in an act of refusal to countenance the possibility that a torturer can choose to re-create his life after such an act of denial of the humanity of any other.

In an interview with Oreste Pucciani (*Tulane Drama Review*, Spring 1961) Sartre corroborated what everybody in Paris already knew, that the immediate subject of the play was the Algerian problem and the use of torture by the French forces there. Why, then, had he written about an ex-Nazi in Germany rather than about an ex-soldier in France? “For the simple reason that there isn’t a theatre in Paris that would have produced it,” Sartre replied. But also, we must add, because he wants to stress the similarity between the actions of France in Algeria and those of the Nazis in France during the Occupation, which the French had believed criminal and uncivilized. Sartre had made this point in an editorial in *Les Temps Modernes* in May 1957, on the occasion of the publication of testimony by recalled French civilian-soldiers on the army’s conduct in Algeria. The French had insisted, Sartre recalled, upon the collective responsibility of the German people for the actions of their leaders and soldiers which they did not actively attempt to oppose; the French had held all the Germans guilty of the concentration camps because they all knew at least something of their existence and did not speak out against them. France, he held, was in the same position with respect to the actions of its police and army in Algeria and should assume its own collective responsibility for these actions. Sartre told Professor Pucciani that his concern in writing *Les Séquestrés d’Altona* had been the French soldier who tortures in Algeria and “who is none the worse for it. He lives perfectly well with what he has done.” By contrast with this soldier who on return to France takes up civilian life as if nothing had ever happened, Frantz, in finally recognizing that he must assert and thus create his responsibility for what he does to or for others, becomes an existentialist hero in his death, a symbol of Sartre’s assertion that all of France must take moral responsibility for what was being done in Algeria in its name.

If this were all there were to the play, we might well consider it an already outdated piece of political propaganda—though there is an awesome complexity of story and character which, despite being a little

over heavily-handedly stamped with existentialist psychology, would be worthy of attention. But Sartre has not done with his audience yet. With the closing speech he very skillfully lifts his play from the context of a limited comment on the individual in a specific national and historical situation to a universality where the spectator suddenly finds himself questioning his own conscience concerning his personal involvement in any use of force as a national policy. Frantz has left behind him a remembrance: his recording machine with what he considers the finest of his pleadings before the tribunal of the future. As Frantz' voice comes from the machine, the remainder of his family leaves the stage and Frantz' words echo to the audience across an empty stage:

The century would have been good if only man hadn't been watched over by his cruel, timeless enemy, the carnivorous species which had sworn to destroy him, the hairless evil animal, man. . . . The animal hid itself, then suddenly we caught his glance in the hidden eyes of our neighbors; so we struck: legitimate preventive defense. I surprised the animal, I struck, a man fell, and in his dying eyes I saw the animal, still alive, myself. . . .

The thirtieth century isn't answering. Perhaps there will be no more centuries after our own. Perhaps a bomb will have blown out the lights. Everything will be dead: eyes, judges, time. Tribunal of the night, you who have been, who will be, who are, I have been! I have been! I, Frantz, von Gerlach, here, in this room, I've taken the century on my shoulders and said: I will answer for it. Today and for ever after.

In this closing speech Sartre tries to associate Frantz' rationalization that all he had done had been justified by the need to save the German people from the ravages of the Allies with the current Western position of armed deterrence and the claim of "legitimate preventive defense" under which it is built and could be used. The story of Frantz, his pleas of innocence and subsequent realization of guilt, would apply to any man or nation which might strike in what it believed to be its own defense—and would itself prove to be the "carnivorous animal" lurking within human nature.

But to what extent is this attempt to point a universal and presently applicable moral justified by the drama itself? In a world in which blows are already constantly being struck by both sides, whether by direct force or by more convenient proxies, the truism that there can be no "legitimate preventive defense" in a nuclear world is of propaganda rather than real value as a guide to moral decision and action. Sartre,

of course, is not recommending an unqualified pacifism in face of aggression. He himself engaged in militant resistance against the Nazis; and in dying against the Nazis, Mathieu, Sartre's hero in the first two and a half books of *Les Chemins de la liberté*, came his closest to finding the act which would define him as a free man. Both Mathieu and Frantz had acted in conscious desire to assert their existential freedom, but Sartre finds the act of Mathieu valid, that of Frantz not. The distinction is that Sartre had also made Mathieu finally act out of a developing sense of unity with his comrades; while, as he observed in an interview with Aragon's *Lettres Françaises*, the degeneration of Frantz from the idealistic youth who attempted the one apparently good act of saving a rabbi is ascribable to the fact that Frantz "does not truly love people. When one does, there are things that one cannot do." Mathieu had finally acted from feeling for others, while Frantz quickly came to desire only to act for himself. But are these differences in the motives of the armed resistance of Mathieu and of Frantz (for, with the closing invocation, we are no longer concerned simply with the case of torture) sufficient explanation why we, the reader—as opposed to the character himself, who assigns his own values valid for himself—should consider Mathieu's act one of valid existential engagement and that of Frantz not? Sartre would have it that, because Mathieu believed in his fellow man, therefore his armed resistance must, deductively, be a valid act of engagement; but we may think that it is rather because Mathieu's act was in defense of a cause that Sartre favored that he endowed Mathieu, by *fiat*, with an existentially valid motive and Frantz with a motive not valid.

We in America have seen the too-easy assumption that those on our side are necessarily of good faith and those against us conspirators often enough to be able to recognize the same fallacy when it comes cloaked in existentialism. Ultimately, Sartre's judgment of the political act must rest not upon his existential analysis but upon his own personal decision which side represents the better of humanity, which side is fighting for the freedom of the individual against oppression. Neither the "bad faith" of Frantz' motives nor the invocation of the spectre of the bomb—that argument from which so many intellectuals assume there can be no appeal against their conclusion—can fill Sartre's need for a logical basis on which he can make the story of Frantz expand to "answer for the century."

The danger of engaged art is that it may, as here, show one thing—the case against torture or the case against the army in Algeria—and

then claim that it has, through the example, proved something greater. Not that art must always be slave to logic; but engaged art, to the extent that it presents a specific political position, must limit its claims to what it has rationally demonstrated, if it is to serve as a valid social force and not degenerate into an intellectual style of demagoguery.

But however we may reject Sartre's pretension of making the story of a torturer "answer for the century," for the West, and for France, the intellectual drama and brooding guilt of this complex and powerful play will persist. We are not all torturers—not yet, at least—but to say that we are not as guilty as Frantz leaves us still guilty and still to be judged by the future, even if that future is one we have destroyed. No one will emerge from this play feeling absolved. Perhaps for just a brief moment Sartre may make us realize that we actually are responsible for our lives.

Richard Wilbur

THE FIGURE IN THE ROSE-RED GOWN

SHIP OF FOOLS. By Katherine Anne Porter. Little, Brown and Company. \$6.50.

Having for years endured something like the fate of a good poet, that is, much neglect from the book industry and its public, much praise from the best critics, Katherine Anne Porter must now, it seems, endure the opposite. Those twenty-two stories that came from thirty years or so of writing—"I have written and destroyed manuscripts quite literally by the trunkload"—earned respect almost as much for the unexploited devotion and restraint of their author as for their artistry. Edmund Wilson expressed this in his review of *The Leaning Tower* in 1944. The language of these few stories, he wrote, was "of a purity and precision almost unique in contemporary American fiction," and he concluded by quoting, in tribute to her, her own credo of the artist who must, despite neglect and the world's disorder, work on alone to perfect his small objects. Today, *Ship of Fools*, a novel of almost five hundred pages, inspires its publishers to buy large spaces for hysterical, strangely old-fashioned advertisements conveying the most damning information. "AN ASTOUNDING RECORD. SHIP OF FOOLS became the nation's #1 best seller more quickly than any other novel in a decade. SHIP OF FOOLS has been purchased for a record sum for a major motion picture production by Stanley Kramer. SHIP OF

FOOLS is a Book-of-the-Month Club Selection. SHIP OF FOOLS has been compared to the best novels of the past hundred years by Mark Schorer in the *N.Y. Times Book Review*. SHIP OF FOOLS has been featured on the front pages of every literary publication in America."

Still, it might be wrong for those of us who read what maybe are not literary publications, or not American, or don't have front pages, to yield too swiftly to the urge of denial. It is true that the manner of this novel is as different from the manner of the stories as the two kinds of public reception have been. But the novel is clearly not aimed at the response that has greeted it; it has nothing in common with a confection like *To Kill a Mockingbird* except that the contents of both have been misrepresented to their purchasers. In this confusion of cause and event, and setting aside the inevitable disappointment of a book that was rather famously being written for twenty years, it may be best to declare at once that *Ship of Fools* is a good book, or, as we say, "not a bad book really." It is better, by most standards, than any best seller since *Dr. Zhivago*; of the order, probably, of Evelyn Waugh's war trilogy. It is something better than almost anyone else is doing now, clearly the work of an interesting mind and an accomplished hand; and yet limited, too, clearly not a great novel, neither central in the power of its view of life nor crucial in the literature of fiction. The publishing phenomena do not matter. This may well be one of those cases in which, as a wise friend remarked, "They decided to let her have this success, after all," and probably before they had read it. The men of the book business and their publicists do this from time to time with real writers, do it, for one reason, in order to keep up their pretense of having something to do with literature, much as the *N.Y. Times Book Review* prints here and there among its puffs something by some ensnared reputable critic.

The odd thing about the reviews I have seen, both the favorable ones in the big "literary publications" and the unfavorable ones in some of the little magazines, has been the reviewers' small interest in saying much about the real tone, the intention, the manner and meaning, of the book.

Here I am not referring either to the question of whether the book is, phrase for phrase, "well-written," or to the question of its supposed allegorical depths. As for the "writing," the language is clear, direct, un-mannered, and quite sufficiently well-spoken in the dialect of modern expository and narrative prose. Allegory at best can provide nothing but a framework for incidents and observations that

must be presented in other terms; *Ship of Fools* by its author's admission claims "this simple almost universal image of the ship of this world on its voyage to eternity." But this is really beyond comment; all art presents as much of this claim as its creator can manage.

In the view that Katherine Anne Porter manages here, there is nothing obscure, nothing like the very genuine difficulty of the stories. One of the few things that could be said about those stories as a body of work was that they refused to yield a meaning, a theme; they refused to make statements, they refused, as it were, to talk about their own business. The reason for this, at one level, is fairly clear; as Edmund Wilson wrote, "What she wants other people to know she imparts to them by creating an object, the self-developing organism of a work of prose." That, for some time, has been our idea of the proper method of the literary artist. Katherine Anne Porter was brought up in literature, she has said, on Henry James, James Joyce, W.B. Yeats, T.S. Eliot, Ezra Pound: whatever else they taught, surely they had one lesson in common, that there had better not be any mere statement in a work of art. This single artistic principle alone unified her stories, and it extended into other reticences, other refusals, also in the modern manner. Related tales refused to become novels. There were no plots. The scenes were small-scale and personal. Each story had its own intimate perfection of language; many had their own self-enclosed structures of symbolic meanings. The author's voice was never heard through the perfect ventriloquism of style.

Ship of Fools is a total departure from this—Symbolist? Symbolist-Naturalist-Impressionist?—method of fiction. It is statement. And it is statement that is more than forthright, it is final, total, relentless. The statements continue throughout the book. The author sees all, knows all, knows the feelings and the most secret thoughts of all her characters, man, woman and beast. This reversion to a literary method not much used by serious writers today does not establish a landmark; it is a personal eccentricity, suitable to the occasion. It does reduce tension, it limits possibilities and responses, it substitutes explanation for drama; yet it allows her to make her point, and she certainly knows exactly what she wants to say.

What she says is quite simply a curse, a cold, joking, remorseless, unpitiful curse. The travellers believe they are bound for a place better than the one they are leaving. This is a cruel joke. Veracruz is Hell, the ship is Hell, they are bound for Hell; being young and being old are Hell; and they are the devils in Hell. They torture one another day and night. Those with good intentions do this rather lugubri-

ously; those who know that they are devils, like the Katzenjammer twins Ric and Rac, perform their tortures with great spirit and fun. The book is pleasant to read because all the characters are hateful and it is a pleasure to see each in turn get his lumps. Most of them are piggish Germans. They suffer for it.

There is no plot, but there really is narrative; no sea adventures, no hurricanes or mutinies, only a dog overboard. Instead of a plot, there is a complex but clearly registered mounting of tensions and an ebb and flow in the forced or sought intimacies of the passengers. These intimacies either fail or if they succeed prove to be superbly revolting. There is no hero, no heroine, nobody on this ship works, nobody succeeds. The ship seems to run of itself. The Captain only pretends to command.

For what it is worth, this is why they are all devils. This is what Katherine Anne Porter was so exquisitely not saying in those stories with their beautifully-arranged images and symbols, their exact and enigmatic actions. What is missing we can see only in one person in all her fiction, the heroic Grandmother of a few stories who wore herself out, after the failure of all the men, running the farm, riding out in winter when women had babies, and who can say, as she lies dying, "I hardly ever lost one of them!" Nobody else in all this world even tries.

The book is an honest and spirited rendering of this view of life. The view has a considerable correspondence to reality. It is easy to deny but less easy to refute, unless those whose experience allows them to refute it may have found that their experience has also set free for them something like the great energy that this truth has given the author.

Aboard the poor suffering ship are three or four women who must remind us, as of course these things do in fiction, of figures of the author herself at various stages of life. One of them is a Mrs. Treadwell. All through the voyage, politely, prettily, she tries to avoid any involvements with the other passengers, although she cannot help letting fall, once in a while, in her light agreeable voice, some deadly remark or some inadvertent word of sympathy. Devotedly she polishes her bright red varnished nails, dresses carefully in "airy yellow stuff," in her "silvery pleated gown," her "perfectly fitted, expensive-looking linen frock," her "lightly pleated gown, rose-red, with a wide gilded leather belt," her "gilded sandals," her "nightgown of smooth white satin, with a buttoned-up collar and full bishop sleeves." Thus beautifully groomed and beautifully mannered, an object of art made with

great care, she preserves her anxious reticence until on the night of the final party one drunken fool comes irrelevantly and brutally to her cabin. Then Mrs. Treadwell, in an access of furious pleasure at last, the voyage nearly over, with the steel-capped heel of her tiny gilded slipper, which suddenly reveals itself as a splendid weapon, beats him with many accurate blows in the face very nearly to death. Perhaps she should have done something different, but what she did she did well, she got away with it, and he deserved it.

John Thompson

REALITY PUBLIC AND PRIVATE

THE AGE OF HAPPY PROBLEMS. By Herbert Gold. Dial Press. \$4.95.

André Malraux once remarked that the American novelist seems to know nothing but his typewriter. We could say that he leaves the guardianship of Western culture to the professors, his brother-writers to the critics, and social issues to the politicians. Of course we have little right to demand of the novelist that he be jungle-adventurer, art-historian and political figure as well, though such pursuits are far from irrelevant to the creation of fiction. True *engagement* for the artist is, as Camus said, to be engaged to his art (and *through* it), but only men make novels and if in their own persons they are too insular to speak out as interested critics and as surrogates of the public conscience, they run the risk that the critical and moral force of their work will be similarly stifled.

If such has been the case especially in this country since the war, then quite without warning we now have signs of a new spirit taking hold. Herbert Gold's mixed bag of essays on American events and American places directly follows a second collection of essays by James Baldwin, Harvey Swados' *A Radical's America* and a new volume of acute and lucid social criticism by the once-esoteric Paul Goodman. One might be tempted to say that a great re-examination of American culture is under way, that the novelist (at least in his off-hours) is resuming his traditional role as a social observer after years of default to the journalist and the popular sociologist. But the substance of the present volume belies such a conclusion, for though its appearance necessarily testifies to some resumption of the public concerns that have usually exercised the novelist, it is at its heart a rallying cry for the sort of inwardness we had grown accustomed to during the fifties. This is particularly true of

the essays on fiction which Mr. Gold rightly includes as an important part of his consideration of the American scene.

What Mr. Gold has succeeded in doing in such essays as "The Mystery of Personality in the Novel" and the ostensibly predictive "Fiction of the Sixties" is to compose a belated manifesto for the fiction of the fifties. "Can there be a powerful general cause for the writers of the sixties, apart from their personal need to tell a story?" he asks. Not surprisingly, he finds that all the great causes have been exhausted. He has nothing but derision for any writer who would accept the easy palliatives of religion, Marxism, hipsterism or any other 'ism. But except for hipsterism, which he considers at length and intelligently, he gives no evidence of having squandered much thought on any of the solutions he casually dismisses. Just as the writers of the coming decade will not be propagandists, Mr. Gold tells us, they will not be chroniclers. "Stripped down to poetry and story and the inauguration of passionate conviction, they will leave the self-conscious recording of the details of the social life to the social historians; the 'research team,' that miniature lonely crowd, is better equipped to perform this interesting but secondary function." The new "metaphysical" novelist will instead create a private reality and personal values by peeling off his skin, by wrestling in the depths of the self with the universal problems of love and death, of isolation and survival, with the dilemma of existence itself.

The obvious flaw of such a program is that in all likelihood the results would be in the highest degree abstract: not formally abstract like modern painting, but physically unrealized, made up of reflection in itself perhaps interesting but incapable of embodying itself with the dense reality of "felt life," incapable of becoming the *concrete*-universal that we demand not only of the novel but of all literature. Some of Mr. Gold's best fiction suffers from this disability. The well-known story "Love and Like," for example, could more accurately borrow a title from one of the essays in the present volume, "Divorce as a Moral Act." The situation clearly has enormous personal significance for the author, but in the story it is too schematic, too thin of detail, too evidently dependent on its creator's will. Perhaps it is not in the nature of the short story to be able to create rich context and to endow its world with autonomous life. One of this year's most serious novels by a young writer is well over four hundred pages long, however, and in reviewing it Paul Goodman finds that its characters "exist in a kind of vacuum: they do not have enough world to grow in. . . . These novels are a spurious genre. What the writer feels and dreams and somewhat knows is nailed on a wooden framework of narrative, though he is not

really storytelling, and the whole is embedded in a cement of documentary background, to make like the world of a novel."

Social realism is not the only norm for the novel, but each departure requires new forms, not simply new intentions. Many recent novelists engage in an unconscious duplicity, for on some deep level they no longer believe in the form that they have inherited and whose techniques they use uncritically. They can no longer imagine any sustaining relation between the individual and the social, yet because they renounce formal experiment—or because the very notion of form is suspect?—they have not discovered new devices commensurate with their new apprehension. Among novelists Kafka too was a metaphysician and his vision of human isolation was if anything more extreme, but rather than fall back automatically on the techniques of realism, he used them originally by playing on the full irony of their inappropriateness; the resulting form made individual alienation the focus of the story rather than the unpremeditated source of its weakness. Under the injunction to keep the great themes of Love and Death in view, metaphysician Gold has room for considerations of form and thus his projected novel of the sixties would remain abstract for just the reason that Kafka is always absolutely concrete.

I have dealt at such length with Gold's essays on the novel partly because they make the most substantial argument, partly because they yield the most revealing clue to his stance toward his subject in all of the others. Mr. Gold's critique has no social dimension: he is unable to uncover the common institutional roots of seemingly divergent individual problems. He makes passing reference to "a social structure which cannot use the largest capacities of millions of individuals," but nowhere is that structure analyzed or even discussed. One could almost say that society is not real for him. As a result he is a valuable critic of some facile and counterfeit forms of community that flourish in America today: among the hipsters, in some college classrooms, in the "new upper-middle soap opera" brought to best-selling perfection by Herman Wouk and others, and in such historic centers of expatriation as the Left Bank and Greenwich Village. He builds up a vast mosaic of flight from the responsibility to communicate, from the obligations of moral choice, from emotion and the risks of love, and from the painful but necessary demands of rebellion and creativity. But he has little to say about how true communion and creativity could come about, other than to recommend time and again a vague "respect for the possibilities of the self."

The Age of Happy Problems will I fear require more complex solutions, and above all they will have to be political as well as personal. When Mr. Gold tells us in his opening essay that culture has become a consolation for the sense of individual powerlessness in politics among other things, we expect that he will go on to investigate—and thereby attack—the sources of that powerlessness, rather than simply to meander no matter how irreverently through the many forms of consolation. To fail to do so is finally the sort of fatalism that was so widespread in the fifties. If this is an age of happy problems, one of the reasons is that few have dared to translate those other *unhappy* problems into political terms, that is, into terms of active choice. To realize the possibilities of the self we must first understand and question vigorously the institutions through which the self is forced to seek its fulfillment. Certainly it is valuable to show how potentially thinking and loving individuals have failed to summon their best energies, and to insist that they are free to do so, but if we take all problems as soluble only through a more strenuous exertion of the private moral will, this too is politics, by default, and in the end a politics *of* default.

Morris Dickstein

CHILDREN IS ALL

JAMES PURDY

Ten new stories and two plays

"A sublime work of pity and tenderness . . . could only have been written by a great writer"—Edith Sitwell, *N. Y. Herald Tribune*

"Anyone who cares for creative vitality must add Purdy to the small list of writers who matter"—*N. Y. Times Book Review*

"We can rejoice again in the possession of this new work by one of America's best writers"—*Saturday Review*

"No one since Henry James has contributed as much to the short story as James Purdy . . . an extraordinary book"—Carl Van Vechten

"Excellent collection. A genuinely original—if sometimes terrifying—mind"—Santha Rama Rau

"The two short plays point to a time when, if Mr. Purdy cares to write for it, the American theatre may truly come of age in sensitivity and sensibility"—William Archibald

"Using gentility and restraint like a pair of swords, Purdy slits open a world so horrible and funny that who can doubt for a minute it is ours? These stories are the surest thing he's done so far, and they leave me with the feeling of having been to a quiet tea party in Babylon or Sodom"—Alfred Chester

\$4.25

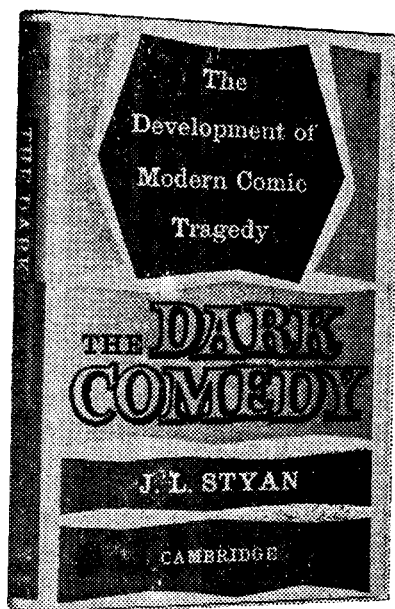
NEW DIRECTIONS 333 Sixth Avenue New York 14, N.Y.

VARIETY

THOUGHTS OF AN UNSERIOUS READER OF EROTICA

In his introduction to the first American edition of *Tropic of Cancer*, Karl Shapiro says: "Every serious reader of erotica has remarked about Miller that he is probably the only author in history who writes about such things with complete ease and naturalness." On the grounds that they write against the background of religion, Shapiro then dismisses Rabelais, Boccaccio, Lawrence and Joyce—but he is silent about such men as Aristophanes, Catullus, Ovid, Petronius, the novelists of the Olympia Press, John Cleve-land, and whoever wrote the *Song of Solomon*. They, of course, are harder to dismiss, for unless by "erotica" Shapiro means the use of dirty words, *Tropic of Cancer* hardly qualifies at all as sexual literature. (Even *Romeo and Juliet* is more stimulating, and if it ever gets translated into English, Shakespeare will have a lot of explaining to do to the Board of Education.)

Miller, in fact, never makes his reader raise more than a blush and, more often than not, the blush is for Henry's delusions of grandeur—as for example when he boasts to Tania that, having taken on his six-incher, she will now be able to take on "stallions, bulls, drakes,



THE DARK COMEDY by J. L. Styan

Much of today's drama defies the standard labels. Comedy? Tragedy? It is neither. It is the drama of pity-turned-joke and uncleaning terror, of the uneasy laugh and the anti-hero.

Mr Styan discusses this dark paradoxical drama; its fore-shadowings in Shakespeare and Molière; its fruition in Ibsen and Chekhov, in Pirandello, Brecht and Anouilh, in Beckett, Ionesco, Tennessee Williams and Pinter. He takes up play after play, disclosing through them the techniques, boundaries and aims of the genre. This is a unique theatre, to be understood and judged on its own terms. Mr Styan discovers and illumines the terms, and he gives the new drama a name, the *Dark Comedy*.

at your booksellers \$5.50

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
32 East 57th St. • New York 22, N. Y.

RAMPARTS

THE NATIONAL CATHOLIC JOURNAL

published and edited by Catholic laymen

ACCLAIMED

"... *Ramparts* will be a valuable addition to the growing number of magazines in America which concentrate on more worthwhile goals than huge circulations!"

—PROVIDENCE EVENING BULLETIN

"Highly recommended"

—LIBRARY JOURNAL



CONTRIBUTORS

Francois Mauriac
Conrad Aiken
Djuna Barnes
Martin Turnell
Gabriel Marcel
Leslie A. Fiedler
John Berryman
Wallace Fowle

PORTRAITS & PERSONALITIES

John Howard Griffin
Salvador Dali
Aubrey Beardsley
Wyndham Lewis

SYMPOSIA

Tennessee Williams
J. D. Salinger
Eugene O'Neill
William Faulkner

REVALUATIONS

Ford Madox Ford
George Santayana
Hart Crane
Edmund Wilson

AN IDEAL HOLIDAY GIFT

RAMPARTS is published in January, March, May, September and November.

RAMPARTS • 1178 Chestnut St. • Menlo Park, Calif.

Please enter my subscription immediately.

☐ 1 year (\$8.50) ☐ 2 years (\$16) ☐ 3 years (\$23) ☐ 4 years (\$29)

☐ Payment enclosed. ☐ Bill me.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____



St. Bernards." For the first thirty or forty pages, Henry's sexual powers and activities are flung vigorously at the reader, but after that, Tarzan beats a slow retreat. He stop bragging, becomes noticeably reticent about his carryings on. Sex continues as a comic device, but it is generally other people's sex, not Henry's. Finally, it more or less disappears altogether, returning only toward the end for a couple of poetical-mystical curtain calls. Most of the last third of the book concerns loveless life at a provincial school and how Henry helps an American friend escape from the clutches of a Frenchwoman. Like his sex, Henry's character too undergoes a purification by milk. The super-duper rabelaisian heman of the early pages dwindles and vanishes in favor of a quite sweet, boyishly amiable fellow, rather like Isherwood's Isherwood. Henry stops bumming and bilging off friends. To our dismay, the heroic vagabond poet has given up screwing and taken a job. Or even two jobs. What does Miller mean by this? Why the initial sexual violence and the later seeping away?

Like Lawrence and Joyce, Miller is a Victorian. His attitude toward sex—my apologies to Shapiro—is not an easy or a natural one at all (that about which we feel easy and natural never demands of us an attitude); it is the attitude of a revolutionary, of the man who has

"For English-speaking readers, this collection is perhaps the richest source of Soviet literature yet made available."

—NEW STATESMAN

DISSONANT VOICES IN SOVIET LITERATURE

Edited by **PATRICIA BLAKE**
and **MAX HAYWARD**

More than 100 pages of new material have been added to the controversial collection which first appeared as a special issue of *Partisan Review*. Ranging from Tendryakov's already-famous "Three, Seven, Ace"—translated here for the first time—to a shocking satire, "This Is Moscow Speaking," by the pseudonymous Nikolai Arzak, the additions include work by such post-Thaw authors as Chukovsky, Kharabarov, and Kazakov. This volume of stories, essays, and poems, representing three generations of Soviet authors, shows the other face of Russian writing since the Revolution.

PANTHEON
\$5.95

I will send a copy of my novel

PORTRAIT OF A SEAMAN

free to anyone



J. INCHARDI

P.O. Box 2032

G.P.O. New York 1, N. Y.

I will send a copy of my novel

LETTERS TO A WATERFRONT PRIEST

free to anyone



J. INCHARDI

P.O. Box 2032

G.P.O. New York 1, N. Y.

felt his lust too long bottled up, squashed down, trod upon. And the lust, when it comes out, comes out as an explosion. Lawrence always explodes into flames, Joyce sometimes into diamonds, usually into tedium. But no matter what the nature of their explosions, both these men are Europeans and therefore less subject to spasms of self-consciousness, to the sudden American embarrassments and disbeliefs. Joyce may doubt his diamonds, but he never doubts his tedium, and so on goes the ponderous aesthetic determination, pushing the explosion right to the end of each work. From A to Z. He gets there. He gets to his icy castle of jewels. Lawrence, of course, never doubts his flames; he gives himself up to them like a woman, and they respond gratefully by never burning out and by putting him into touch with the godhead. The explosion sustains itself and him from start to finish. (I am not necessarily going along here with the popular belief that Lawrence is altogether at the mercy of his flames, choiceless. It is true he gives himself up to the flames like a woman, but like a woman he is usually facing the facts about his passion and so he does not lose control. He knows he is in love with a selfish half-wit, and while he is lying there panting spreadeagled with the holy fire panting over him, he is all the time worrying: "Will the wretch

pull out in time? Is he going to leave hickeys all over my lovely white body? Should I remind him I like a short and rapid rhythm?" When he stops worrying and abandons himself entirely to the holy fire, as in *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, he doesn't have much fun (nor do we), he becomes a mess of black and blue marks, and he ends up having an abortion not a book.)

Miller's explosion—to describe it in his own terms—is a horrendous fart, a volcanic belch. Visceral, noisy, aromatic, but neither visible nor tangible. We hear it briefly, smell it briefly, and then it is gone, and gone so completely that one wonders was it ever there at all? It is gone, and with it has gone the Henry Miller we were introduced to—and who should we have in his place?

Can it be—?

But no!

Oh yes, it is!

Duck, everyone, here he comes, that diabolical little Mr. America, straw hat on his head, fishing pole in his hand, soft innocence between his legs, his bright freckled face tripping Miller up, the same way it always trips all of us up.

Who else, but the fiercest, the most virulent of our enemies: Tom Sawyer. The good clean boy in the American soul is always there even when we are acting and writing like horrid dirty old men. He is

always lurking there, waiting for that moment of self-doubt, of incredulity at one's own violence—and then he comes ambling in, cute as can be. His wholesome blue eyes look up at you straight and fine, and he says: "Revolution? What revolution?" And while you end up painting the fence for him, he shoots you in the back.

R.I.P.

Tropic of Cancer

Infected by self-doubt. Mutilated by Optimism. Destroyed by the National Plague, Innocence. The one known Doctor, Art, never called to the bedside because Father Miller believes in Natural Healing.

Art was the only thing that could have saved the book, but Father Miller claims he is in scorn of Art, says he wants to give it "a gob of spit in the face." And the way he goes about it is by cutting

PUBLISHING

Planning to publish a book or booklet? Our **free folder** outlines a low-cost production and distribution service (author owns all copies and rights plus 70% royalty on our sales).

WILLIAM-FREDERICK PRESS

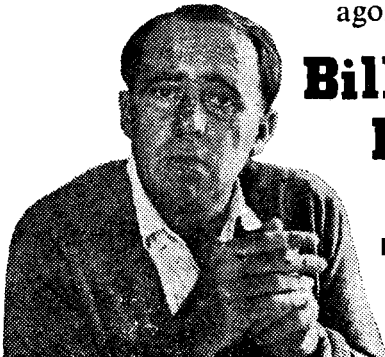
55 East 86th Street, New York 28, N. Y.

off his own, well, nose. Instead of pushing on with his attitude, even while Tom Sawyer works against him, he reports a series of events that sound more literal than the first explosive pose but which also contradict it. Miller claims a revolutionary point of view every chance he gets, but except for the first few shrieks, he never acts like a revolutionary, and he never tells us what there is to revolt against. He chooses Life, disordered and nonselective, which is fine except that he is then, like God but unlike the artist, not entitled to judgments, philosophies or revolutions.

He says: "My idea in collaborat-

ing with myself has been to get off the gold standard of literature. My idea briefly has been to present a resurrection of the emotions, to depict the conduct of a human being in the stratosphere of ideas, that is, in the grip of delirium. To paint a pre-Socratic being, a creature part goat, part Titan." So he wants to get off the gold standard, to break with over-sanctified traditions. O.K. Bravo. Art, like Nature, smiles kindly on the man who changes her wardrobe. She even smiles kindly on the man who merely tears up her old clothes, for she knows that the sight of her rags will excite an army of seamstresses into hysterical

The rise and the fall, the guilt and the redemption — the entire German experience is captured in this masterful story of a single German family through three agonized generations



Billiards at Half-Past Nine

By HEINRICH BÖLL

\$4.95, now at your
bookstore **McGraw-Hill**



action. But on a lousy dressmaker Art does not smile. And all the bragging and swaggering and screaming isn't going to do a bit of good, because Art will merely avert her cruel eyes when Tom Sawyer rises full blown out of the unconscious with his trusty little weapon in his hand. Bang! Bang! Down, as I have said above, down comes *Cancer*, dead upon the reader's spirit. And where is the human being conducting himself in the stratosphere of ideas, in the grip of delirium? Where is that marvelous pre-Socratic man? I know where. He's buried in that delirious, stratospheric, pre-and-post Socratic cesspool that lies between intention and achievement. And the person Miller gives us as a hero is a little pipsqueak whose six phoney inches of revolutionary posturing cannot deeply be felt by our world full of aching size-queens in desperate need of philosophic stallions, bulls, rams, etc.

The life Miller demonstrates is not a life that merits violence. Practically everything in his book turns out all right. Everyone ultimately gets fed, gets drunk, gets laid, escapes or overcomes his troubles. It is too trivial a world to warrant revolution; hatred of this world is as ridiculous as John Osborne's rage about the queen of England. And Miller senses his failure. Toward the end, he throws his book away and talks at length about the world he has not re-

created, the world he really hates. He talks about the book he would have written. It would have been, in spite of all its comedy, tragic, with MAN as the hero, with all the horror and muck of life there on the pages for the reader to live through, not merely to be told about in a few paragraphs:

On a damp winter's night it is not necessary to look at the map to discover the latitude of Paris. It is a northern city, an outpost erected over a swamp filled in with skulls and bones . . . Blocks and blocks of jagged tenements, every window closed tight, every shopfront barred and bolted. Miles and miles of stone prisons without the faintest glow of warmth; the dogs and the cats are all inside with the canary birds. The cockroaches and bedbugs too are safely incarcerated. If you haven't a sou, why just take a few old newspapers and make yourself a bed on the steps of the cathedral. The doors are well bolted and there will be no draughts to disturb you. Better still is to sleep outside the Metro doors; there you will have company. Look at them on a rainy night, lying there stiff as mattresses—men, women, lice, all huddled together and protected by the newspapers against spittle and the vermin that walks without legs. Look at them under the bridges or under the market sheds. How vile they look in comparison with the clean, bright vegetables stacked up like jewels. Even the dead horses and the cows and sheep hanging from the greasy hooks look more inviting. At least we will eat tomorrow and even the intestines

*Withered tufts of grass . . .
There was and still is
An old witch*

OLD GREEN WITCH

Plants for the
cognoscenti

trees

herbs

flowers

succulents

vines

ceramics

metal pots

hanging baskets

249 West 13th Street
New York City
(Corner of Greenwich Ave.)

Open 2-7, Monday through Friday
Or by appointment, WA 9-8529

will serve a purpose. But these filthy beggars lying in the rain, what purpose do they serve? What good can they do us? They make us bleed for five minutes, that's all.

Oh, well these are night thoughts produced by walking in the rain after two thousand years of Christianity. At least now the birds are well provided for, and the cats and dogs. Every time I pass the concierge's window and catch the full icy impact of her glance I have an insane desire to throttle all the birds in creation. At the bottom of every frozen heart there is a drop or two of love—just enough to feed the birds.

But this is not the vision of the rest of the book. Taken by itself, this passage is writing of the highest order. Set in context, it is merely sentimental. He is being tragic about the abstract, about the *idea* of the tragic, about those he doesn't know personally. Those Miller does know personally he doesn't see as tragic at all. He sees them as funny, silly, somewhat pathetic—and everything always comes out right for them in the end.

So *Tropic of Cancer*, says I, isn't a great book. So? There is a consolation prize, however. Think of what pleasure it is to disagree with Karl Shapiro. And what pleasure it is to disagree with that long and laudatory list of eminent names that appears on the dust jacket like a list of vitamins and minerals: Eliot, Pound, Durrell,

Anais Nin, Orwell, etc. And what pleasure to disagree also with the whole of the beat generation and their sycophants who have learned from Miller to worship the abstract, to shed tears over generalities, to sentimentalize the invisible, to posture at revolutions that even *Time* magazine approves of. Miller is finally up there, enshrined at last, of great historical importance. But I'm sure he'd be the first to agree that ancestor worship is wrong, never mind the fact that he himself this time happens to be the ancestor.

Alfred Chester

LIBERAL PRESS

printers of

PARTISAN REVIEW



80 FOURTH AVE.

NEW YORK 3, N. Y.

STATEMENT REQUIRED BY THE ACT OF AUGUST 24, 1912, AS AMENDED BY THE ACTS OF MARCH 3, 1933, JULY 2, 1946 AND JUNE 11, 1960 (74 STAT. 208) SHOWING THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, AND CIRCULATION OF Partisan Review published quarterly at New York, N. Y. for October 1, 1962.

1. The names and addresses of the publisher, editor, managing editor, and business managers are:

Publisher: American Committee for Cultural Freedom; Editor: William Phillips and Philip Rahv; Managing editor: None; Business manager: Erika Munk. All of 22 E. 17th St. New York 3, N. Y.

2. The owner is: (If owned by a corporation, its name and address must be stated and also immediately thereunder the names and addresses of stockholders owning or holding 1 percent or more of total amount of stock. If not owned by a corporation the names and addresses of the individual owners must be given. If owned by a partnership or other unincorporated firm, its name and address, as well as that of each individual member must be given.)

Chairman, Board of Directors: Arnold Beichman, 22 E. 17th St., New York 3, N. Y.; Chairman of the Legal Commission: C. Dickerman Williams, 22 E. 17th St., New York 3, N. Y.; Board of Directors: Daniel Bell, Sidney Hook, Hans Kohn, William Phillips, Merlyn S. Pitzele, Norman Podhoretz, Irwin Ross, Norman Thomas, Bertram D. Wolfe. All of 22 E. 17th St., New York 3, N. Y.

3. The known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders owning or holding 1 percent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities are: (If there are none, so state.) None.

4. Paragraphs 2 and 3 include, in cases where the stockholder or security holder appears upon the books of the company as trustee or in any other fiduciary relation, the name of the person or corporation for whom such trustee is acting; also the statements in the two paragraphs show the affiant's full knowledge and belief as to the circumstances and conditions under which stockholders and security holders who do not appear upon the books of the company as trustees, hold stock and securities in a capacity other than that of a bona fide owner.

5. The average number of copies of each issue of this publication sold or distributed, through the mails or otherwise, to paid subscribers during the 12 months preceding the date shown above was: (This information is required by the act of June 11, 1960 to be included in all statements regardless of frequency of issue.) 5,872.

Erika Munk, Business Manager. Sworn to and subscribed before me this 26th day of November, 1962. George A. Wardley, Notary Public, State of New York, Qualified in Nassau County, No. 30-9532950, Commission Expires March 30, 1964.

PREUVES

publie dans son numéro
de Janvier

RAYMOND ARON

La République gaulliste continue

MICHEL CORPIERRE

Le totalitarisme africain

FRANCOIS BONDY

La Catalogne —
mieux qu'une région

MAURICE GIRODIAS

La Censure et moi



PREUVES:

18, Avenue de l'Opéra — PARIS (1er)

Le N° de 96 pp. ill.—France: 3 N.F.—
Etranger: 3,50 N.F.

C.C.P. PARIS 178-00

Un ancien numéro sera gracieusement
envoyé sur simple demande,
comme specimen

Just Published

Frank
Kermode

PUZZLES and
EPIPHANIES



*24 personalities
reviewed and essayed—*

among them

Edmund Wilson,

E. M. Forster,

James Joyce,

Boris Pasternak,

Allen Tate,

Christopher Isherwood,

Evelyn Waugh,

Henry Miller,

William Golding,

J. D. Salinger



Chilmark Press

Distributed by Random House
and available in all bookstores

CORRESPONDENCE

A Premature Obituary

SIRS,

One of the weaknesses of Norman Birnbaum's "The Coming End of Anti-Communism" (PR, Summer, 1962) lies in the excessive abstractness of his argument. Though some of his formulations are shrewd and pertinent, I had a little trouble identifying his target—an anti-Communist doctrine allegedly so concerned with the ideological and psychological attributes of the Communist movement as to consider "constraint, compulsion, force and terror" relatively unimportant "epiphenomena." Mr. Birnbaum's careful avoidance of names and specific instances makes one wonder whose demise he so confidently predicts.

Nonetheless Mr. Birnbaum's principal thesis is clear enough. I believe it to be largely and perhaps dangerously wrong. This is not to deny the validity of some of his assumptions. I have no quarrel with his view that anti-Communism is no substitute for a positive social program or vision . . . It is a truism that single-minded preoccupation with an external threat, however real and ominous, is conducive to minimizing . . . "the discrepancy between Western theory and Western practice."

More importantly, one can readily agree that the recent crisis in Communism and the "development of polycentrism in the Communist movement" has weakened if not altogether invalidated some generalizations about the nature of Soviet totalitarianism which until recently carried much weight with anti-Communist intellectuals. The Communist system has proved somewhat more flexible and has become somewhat less monolithic than many of us had deemed possible in 1950. . . .

HARPER COLOPHON BOOKS



THE ART OF LOVING

An Enquiry Into the Nature of Love. By ERICH FROMM. CN 1. \$1.25

OUT OF THE PAST

The Forces That Shaped Modern America. By CARL N. DEGLER. CN 2. \$2.45

EXCELLENCE

Can We Be Equal and Excellent Too? By JOHN W. GARDNER. CN 3. \$1.35

IN HAZARD

By RICHARD HUGHES. A novel by the author of *The Fox in the Attic* and *A High Wind in Jamaica*. CN 4. \$1.50

THE NEW POLITICS

America and the End of the Post-war World. By EDMUND STILLMAN and WILLIAM PFAFF. CN 5. \$1.35

HISTORY OF ENGLAND

From Roman Times to the End of the First World War. By E. L. WOODWARD. CN 6. \$1.35



A New Harper Torchbook

Literary Opinion in America

Edited by Morton D. Zabel

"The one indispensable anthology of contemporary American criticism."—ALLEN TATE

Vol. I TB 3013 \$2.45

Vol. II TB 3014 \$2.45

HARPER & ROW, Publishers, Inc.
New York 16, N. Y.

So far, so good. But—and this is my first major quarrel with Mr. Birnbaum—if such distinguished but not infallible students of Soviet society as Bertram D. Wolfe have overestimated the fundamental rigidity and homogeneity of the System, Mr. Birnbaum errs more grievously by grossly exaggerating its openness and fluidity. He dismisses as nonsense the notion of limited and peaceful de-Stalinization: “If a genuine opposition emerges in the Soviet Union it will define itself through conflict.” Many will agree with this, but some will conclude that “genuine opposition” is not likely to emerge in the Soviet Union for quite a while. Not so Mr. Birnbaum. “There will be strikes, demonstrations and violence in the Soviet Union before the process can be completed.” Again an arguable proposition. But one becomes wary when Mr. Birnbaum goes on to declare: “The very possibility of such

conflict . . . had diminished the intellectual respectability of those sorts of anti-Communism which insist on the impossibility of open political conflict in the Communist states.”

The argument would be much more compelling had the likelihood of strikes, demonstrations, etc. been demonstrated rather than merely postulated. Whatever amount of grim satisfaction one may derive from Khrushchev's belated admissions, the fact remains that both the Twentieth and the Twenty-second Congresses of the Soviet Communist Party were totalitarian performances. The bitter struggle for power and the concomitant factional strife had been driven underground. The “anti-Party” villains were not given their day in court. In fact, it is still possible to maintain that where the Communist regime is in effective control—in 1956 such controls collapsed in Hungary and were on the verge of

SHAW: The Style and the Man

by RICHARD M. OHMANN, Editor of *Inquiry and Expression*
and *The Making of Myth*

“In brief, my position comes to this: The very many decisions that add up to a style are decisions about what to say, as well as how to say it. They reflect the writer's organization of experience, his sense of life, so that the most general of his attitudes and ideas find expression just as characteristically in his style as in his matter, though less overtly. Style, in this view, far from being intellectually peripheral ornament, is what I have called ‘epistemic choice,’ and the study of style can lead to insight into the writer's most confirmed epistemic stances.”—from the author's Introduction. \$5.00



from the publishers of the Wesleyan Poetry Program

WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY PRESS

MIDDLETOWN, CONNECTICUT

breaking down in Poland—it is determined and able to squelch “open political conflict.” Within Communist states, if not necessarily between Communist states, “open political debate,” let alone “strikes, demonstrations, violence,” remains a remote prospect. . . .

Furthermore, even if the recent trends had made obsolete the particular brand of anti-Communism which Mr. Birnbaum sets out to demolish, the phrase “the coming end of anti-Communism” might still be a bit too sweeping. Yet I am afraid that this title is not a misnomer. Apparently Mr. Birnbaum is so sanguine about the resurgence of the anti-authoritarian elements in the Communist tradition as to consider any kind of “systematic anti-Communism,” that is, of consistent and unequivocal opposition to the Communist system *in toto*, as intellectually sterile and politically conservative or, in his own words, incompatible with a “radically innovating social policy.” Thus an organic connection is established between the uninspired political tameness of Western European social democracy and its allegedly rigid anti-Communism.

On the face of it German social democracy seems to provide a telling example of the tendency decried by Mr. Birnbaum. Yet whatever one’s views on the ultra-moderate, pragmatic revision of Marxism recently undertaken by German socialists, clearly the intensity of Willy Brandt’s anti-Communism owes much less to what Mr. Birnbaum might term the creeping conservatism of his party than to the brutal threat to the freedom and prosperity of West Berlin presented by the system whose true nature is still much more accurately represented by Ulbricht’s Wall than by Kolakowski’s subtly subversive parables or Evtushenko’s lyrical manifestos.

Milovan Djilas, who has learned the

hard way about the limits of Communist “liberalism,” concludes his *Conversations with Stalin* thus: “Those who wish to live and survive in a world different than the one Stalin created, and *which in essence and in full force still exists*, must fight.” (My italics, V.E.)

The Western socialist, I submit, will do well to heed Djilas’ warning. To be sure, “it is hardly possible any longer to depict Communist society as unredeemably black.” (Precious few societies, incidentally, would warrant such a description.) It is true that such a description.) It is true that a common language with a number of individuals who as a matter of inertia, nostalgia, confusion or expediency still call themselves Communists. . . . Yet revisionism *modo* Kolakowski has had little impact upon the core of the Communist system. Thus, to proclaim anti-Communism obsolete may be a trifle premature. Today as ten years ago there is good reason to look askance at an ostensibly liberal or radical position which can be reduced to anti-Communism. By the same token, it is still possible and indeed appropriate to question either the political soundness or the libertarian commitment of any radical who fails to include flexible anti-Communism—Mr. Birnbaum notwithstanding, this is not a contradiction in terms!—among the major articles of his faith.

Victor Erlich

SIRS,

I wish to thank Mr. Erlich for the reasonable tone and courteous manner of his remarks, which contrast with my article’s reception elsewhere. (I suppose that Mr. Erlich is more sure of himself.) I shall deal briefly with some of the points he was good enough to raise.

IN COMING ISSUES OF PR

LIONEL TRILLING

The Fate of Pleasure

LIONEL ABEL

The Naked Lunch

GEORGE LICHTHEIM

The New Rome

ROBERT BRUSTEIN

Brecht Reconsidered

DANIEL FRIEDENBERG

Draper and Cuba

. . . and an entire issue of
new European writing, edited
by MARY MCCARTHY.

1. Our views on the potentiality for the open expression of conflict in Communist systems are antithetical; time will tell whether those who were so wrong in 1950 will have saved anything of their predictions by 1970. For the moment, to assert that Stalin's world survives "in essence" seems to me historically inadequate. Like many others, I signed a protest to Yugoslavia about Djilas' imprisonment; I do not think that he is being held in jail by the "essence" of Stalinism but by a Titoist regime which, under certain circumstances, can be induced to adopt more civilized and libertarian standards of political behavior.

2. I did not declare flexible anti-Communism merely a contradiction in terms, but held that it had proven impossible to develop in practice. Mayor Brandt and the German Social Demo-

crats would do well to give less attention to the Berlin Wall as such and more to their own share of the responsibility for its erection. They supported the foreign policy which, *inter alia*, led to the wall; equally, they approved the Federal Republic's attempt to impose a quarantine on Communist Germany—which has helped maintain Ulbricht in power. I would agree that it is tragic that the German Social Democrats should find that their anti-Communism has led them into alignment with other enemies of freedom (a designation I should not for one moment hesitate to apply to large numbers in the ruling elite of the Federal German Republic). This should be the occasion for socialists to examine their anti-Communism critically, again, and to draw different political conclusions from it. Incidentally, hasn't the German Social Democratic Party in any case now taken over Lenin's doctrine of "democratic centralism"—and expelled a whole batch of opponents of its policy?

3. Mr. Erlich does not deal with one of my points which I thought was obvious and which, if wrong, surely merits attention. Insofar as intellectuals like himself support that curious combination of official and vulgar anti-Communism which lends America, from outside, the appearance of a lunatic asylum, are they not serving as accomplices in preparation for the supreme moral abomination of thermonuclear warfare? This does not mean that they should cease a critical analysis of Communism; it does mean that they are morally obliged to think again about the utilization of their energies. In the meantime, the assumption that Communism cannot evolve towards liberty may well generate support for policies which make their own contribution to preventing that evolution.

Norman Birnbaum

SIRS,

*On Reading the Dialogue Between
Ernest Hemingway and
Leslie Fiedler's Thoughts*

God grant Dr. Fiedler,
When blinded by death's sun,
Undimmed insight, health, and guests
Whose tongues and hearts are one.

W. D. Martin

SIRS,

It may have seemed to Mr. Leslie Fiedler (PR, Summer 1962) that he has disposed of the upstart lady from Seattle, put her forever in her philistine place. If he has, and if her words constitute a kind of rubric of its ways, the lady's place would seem to be in part, then, Mr. Fiedler's, too, or so at least one must suppose, his account of his visit with Ernest Hemingway being what it is and the voice and

manner of its telling—knowing, reductive, familiar—being the sophisticated equivalent of the Washington lady's own. Does this signify the triumph of the female principle or is it a subtle stratagem of Mr. Fiedler's method? The questions perhaps suggest their own answers, suggest, too, those proclivities of critical temper that make so much of what he writes seem arbitrary, exhibitionistic, vaguely got-up; and his piece on Hemingway is no exception.

He had motored to Ketchum expecting . . . one can't be certain what. To be beguiled, perhaps, ravished by a big, masculine, authoritative man materializing the romance of legendary places, magical names, elite literary causes, a hero of effort and experience—the public, the apocryphal Hemingway, the Hemingway of hearsay, confidential reportage, truculent com-

Franz Kafka

PARABLE AND PARADOX

By Heinz Politzer University of California, Berkeley

HERE at last is a book which treats Kafka as literature pure and simple, though not so pure and not so simple. Rather than stressing the timeliness of Kafka's vision, the book explores the timelessness of his imagery. Politzer considers the paradoxical parable as the basic form of all Kafka's works and examines them according to this conception. What emerges is a series of brilliant and highly original interpretations.

397 pages, illus., \$6.50



CORNELL UNIVERSITY PRESS

124 Roberts Place, Ithaca, New York

mentary, boastful self-exposure. He meets instead a man who is old, blasted, suddenly mortal, whose powers and occupation are gone, his discipline demoralized by the stratagems of an enemy that, from whatever cause, he is now helpless to oppose, who is unable to form his thoughts, to express himself in anything but stammering banalities, is limited to a few extravagant references to old rivals and new pretenders—and this Ernest Hemingway, now only earthly, thwarts Mr. Fiedler's expectations, disillusion his years-long faith in his—Hemingway's—eternal physical gloriousness. Even his hand is intact after clasping Hemingway's, the toughness of his grip still untried. But perhaps Hemingway didn't regard Mr. Fiedler—a literary man—as sufficiently gladiatorial (he no doubt lived by his fictions, too), respecting him for his weakness without ceasing to despise him for his lack; or perhaps

Hemingway divined that his reputation and survival depended on his visitor's future good will and, desperate, wished to do nothing to forfeit it; or perhaps, again, he felt that hand-wrestling did little to ennoble the male relation; or it may just be that Hemingway wasn't the exhibitionist and boor Mr. Fiedler had tensed himself to meet. Does his discovery come down to no more than this last? At any rate, instead of assuming that what he sees is neither more nor less than what it painfully, primitively shows itself to be, he concludes not that the "legend," if it ever existed—and it seems something of a legend itself—is for obvious reasons now defunct, but that it was a fiction to begin with, a fraud from the start, an imposture of Hemingway's and his public's own making, and a tyranny from which his reader, for his own intellectual health, must be delivered. And composed, tough-nerved,

Why Americans Still Fight The Spanish Civil War

THE WOUND IN THE HEART

By Allen Guttman

In this provocative book, Allen Guttman probes the extraordinary impact of the Spanish Civil War on the American conscience — shows why even today our political alignments reflect divisions first crystallized by this remote struggle.

He has combed every available source from the period — novels, films, periodicals, cartoons — to explain the intensity of American responses.

The controversial role of American Catholic clergy and laymen . . . the shocking paradox of the Roosevelt administration's failure to support the beleaguered republic . . . personal reactions among minority groups — no facet of the American political spectrum is left unexamined.

For those who remember the Spanish Civil War, its tragedy rises afresh in this memorable work. And for a younger generation, here are the reasons why "the last great cause" has never really died. Illus., \$5.95

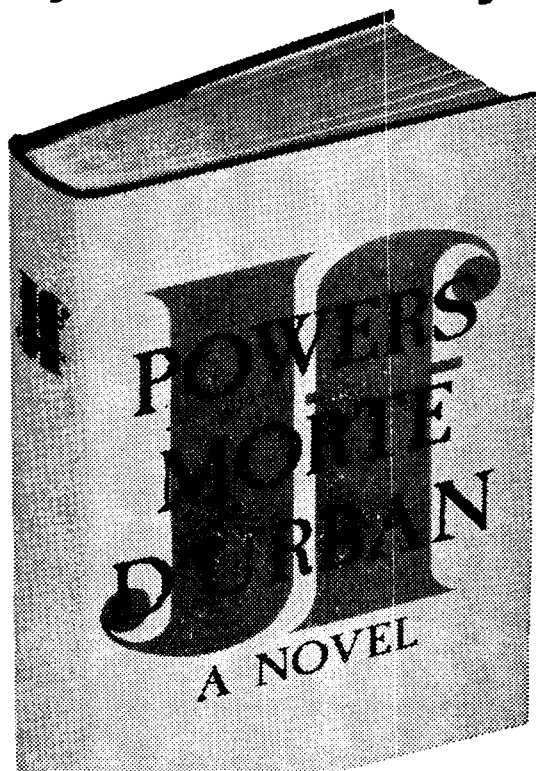
FP THE FREE PRESS OF GLENCOE A Division of The Macmillan Company

detached, he sets about his tendentious business with often coarse, always beligerent zeal, rebuking, patronizing, derogating, in fluent asides that, given the occasion and the vulnerableness of his subject, seem almost indecent. For Hemingway was a writer who, whatever his extravagances and later malfruits, had persevered over an adult lifetime to keep up his exacting ideals of self and craft, and who, "great" novelist or not, deserves better for having lived and written as he did than the ungenerous treatment accorded him by Mr. Fiedler. (And, incidentally, what makes Mr. Fiedler suppose that his way is the only alternative to the "condescension" of "pity" he speaks of, or for that matter, that the employment of such a catch-phrase is any less condescending than the "pity" he so self-congratulatorily shuns?) Mr. Fiedler is obviously of a different mind, however, and thinks apparently that his loyalty is to "Truth," or rather, to a particularly modernist conception of it, and that to have reported his visit otherwise than he did would have been to betray the high obligations of his calling, the inviolableness of his sense of things, even perhaps to have been less than the democratic man he so plain-spokenly is. And what has he conceived the "Truth" in this case to be? Why, that the Hemingway of Ketchum is coexistent with the Hemingway of all the years and days before; and that both as a writer and a man he is no more than the sum of his excesses, his limitations, the lifelong reflex of an incriminating doubt. If simplification can go further or become more vulgar, judgment mix the cynical, the unimaginative, the disingenuous into more bewildering sophistries, Mr. Fiedler will surely have done much to provide the precedent.

Does he seriously believe such reductions or honestly suppose that the reader for whom he wrote would have been victimized by the "legend," would not perhaps have found his solicitudinousness presumptuous, his efforts supererogatory? Probably yes, if his own words are to be believed. And if they are, then the convenient lady from Seattle was both wrong and right, for Mr. Fiedler's "Truth" belongs to journalism, is the property more particularly of those publications that promote synthetic maleness, mannered virility, cultural expertise, primitivist aplomb—make-believes fashioned for a democracy of the loins. It is a journalism that thinks in "images," abstractions, generalities, in formulations that caricature, in big conceptions that level and banalize, a journalism that has mastered all intellectual styles, methods, vocabularies, that travesties the forms of thought, sophisticates the language of discernment. Cynical, amoral, demotic, antagonistic to effort, order, difference and the past, fiercely immediate, smartly existential, it values the glib synthesis, the cheeky incongruity, the effronterous parallel, the discursion that trivializes, the analysis that inflates. And "terriblist" (or so it seems to think of itself), mistaking exposure for truth, cynicism for irony and principle, criticism for demeanment, candor and confidentiality for honesty, it fancies itself appointed to impeach the rules, the deceptions by which a thwarted, philistine culture chooses to live. And Mr. Fiedler, for all his differences and the superiority of his literary equipment—or perhaps because of them—seems one with that journalism in the spirit of his animus, his method, his ethics.

Douglas Taylor

**The publication of J. F. Powers' first novel
is justly described as a literary event**



"Powers has done something quite remarkable: he has revived the satire of the Great Age — from Erasmus to Swift, let's say, reverting to tradition — within a modern context of style and attitude . . . Crisp, bitter, hilarious throughout, [Morte D'Urban] may be a great work of art. What is more to the point in a book review, it is likely to be a popular work of art — something touching a large, tender area of the general conscience . . ."

— Hayden Carruth, *The New Republic*

"Original, funny, ironic, and wryly moving . . . Father Urban, in his triumphs and humiliations, and this first novel, of which he is the hero, are wonderfully complete creations . . . J. F. Powers is not selling anything or arguing or attacking or defending. The book is; Urban is; they embody completely what Powers has to say. This is the way the world is — only funnier."— Lucy Johnson, *The Progressive*

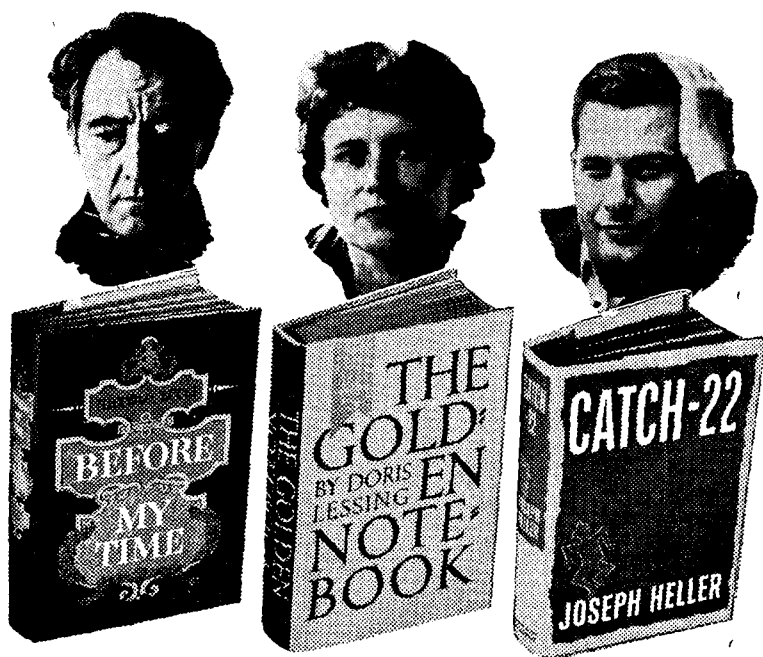
\$4.50 at all booksellers

DOUBLEDAY

Niccolò
Tucci

Doris
Lessing

Joseph
Heller



Coming in 1963 — A FAVOURITE OF THE GODS, the new
novel by Sybille Bedford, her first since *A Legacy*.

Simon and Schuster, Publishers

630 Fifth Avenue, New York 20

BACK ISSUES

- Winter 1962:** "The Cold War and the West," a symposium from Arendt to Wright, including Irving Howe, H. Stuart Hughes, Robert Lowell, Mary McCarthy, David Riesman, C. P. Snow, many others. Also a story by Bernard Malamud and an essay by Fiedler on Salinger.
- #5-6, 1961:** Robert Brustein, "The Macison Avenue Villain"; Wright Morris on Ernest Hemingway; Thalia Selz's prize-winning story "Education of a Queen."
- Summer 1960:** Mary McCarthy, "The Fact in Fiction"; Philip Rahv on Dostoevsky.
- Fall 1959:** Special issue on the contemporary theater, with contributions by Norman Mailer, Lionel Abel, Robert Brustein, Gore Vidal, Harold Clurman, others.
- Fall 1957:** "A View of the Woods," a story by Flannery O'Connor; Alfred Kazin on Faulkner; Sidney Hook, "Socialism and Liberation."
- Fall 1956:** An autobiographical narrative by Robert Lowell; Saul Bellow on Isaac Rosenfeld; James Baldwin, "Faulkner and Segregation."

Any of these, 85¢ each.

ALSO: PR's special Russian issue, edited by Patricia Blake and Max Hayward, has now been published as a book, but the original is still available at only \$1.25.

Order from

PARTISAN REVIEW, 22 East 17th Street, New York 3, N. Y.

INDEX TO VOLUME XXIX

	Issue	Page
ARENDT, HANNAH		
The Cold War and the West (symposium)	1	10
ABEL, LIONEL		
(br) The Theatre of the Absurd. By Martin Esslin	3	454
ADAMS, ROBERT MARTIN		
The Bent Knife Blade: Joyce in the 1960's	4	507
BAZELON, DAVID T.		
A New Kind of War	4	543
BELL, DANIEL		
The National Style and the Radical Right	4	519
BELLOW, SAUL		
Humanitis—A Farce	3	327
BERRYMAN, JOHN		
"The Prisoner of Shark Island" with Paul Muni; Silent Song (poems)	4	539
BIRNBAUM, NORMAN		
The Coming End of Anti-Communism	3	386
CHESTER, ALFRED		
Thoughts of an Unserious Reader of Erotica	4	617
CHIAROMONTE, NICOLA		
(br) The Empty Canvas. By Alberto Moravia.	1	143
COSER, LEWIS		
(br) Beyond Conformity. By Winston White	2	295
(br) The Image, or What Happened to the American Dream. By Daniel J. Boorstin; The American Establishment. By Richard Rovere	3	443
DAVIE, DONALD		
Frontenac (poem)	1	92
DE JONG, DAVID CORNEL		
Way-Station (poem)	2	239
DEMENTIEV, ALEXANDER		
Comment on PR's Russian Issue	2	303
DICKSTEIN, MORRIS		
(br) The Age of Happy Problems. By Herbert Gold	4	612
EVTUSHENKO, EVGENY		
Baby Yar (poem)	1	113

	Issue	Page
FIEDLER, LESLIE		
(br) Franny and Zooey. By J. D. Salinger	1	127
Hemingway in Ketchum	3	395
FLINT, R. W.		
(br) Advice to a Prophet. By Richard Wilbur	1	147
Poetry Chronicle: The Tennis Oath, by		
John Ashbery: New and Selected Poems, by Donald		
Davies; Drowning with Others, by James Dickey;		
Poems: 1929-1961, by Francis Fergusson	2	290
FRANK, JOSEPH		
(br) Alexander Herzen. By Martin Malia	2	284
GILLIATT, PENELOPE		
Dupes of the Art Film	3	421
GOLDWATER, ROBERT		
Art Chronicle	1	116
Art Chronicle	3	416
GOODMAN, PAUL		
(br) Arshile Gorky. By Harold Rosenberg	3	448
Gorky and History: An Exchange	4	587
GREENBERG, MARTIN		
Fiction Chronicle: Raditzer, by Peter Matthiessen;		
The Beautiful Greed, by David Madden; Clem		
Anderson, by R. V. Cassill; Three Novels, by		
Daniel Fuchs; Selected Tales, by Nikolai Leskov	1	149
HARDWICK, ELIZABETH		
(br) Culture and Social Character. Edited by		
Seymour Lipset and Leo Lowenthal	1	132
HINE, DARYL		
Hippolytus: Poland, 1960 (poem)	4	540
HOLLANDER, JOHN		
(br) A New Life. By Bernard Malamud	1	137
(br) In Parenthesis. By David Jones	3	451
HOOK, SIDNEY		
The Cold War and the West (symposium)	1	20
HOWE, IRVING		
The Cold War and the West (symposium)	1	27
(br) Utopian Essays and Practical Proposals. By Paul Goodman	4	599
HUGHES, H. STUART		
The Cold War and the West (symposium)	1	35
KAEL, PAULINE		
Movie Chronicle: Little Men	4	564

	Issue	Page
KAZIN, ALFRED		
Sons, Lovers, and Mothers	3	373
KERMODE, FRANK		
(br) On the Contrary. By Mary McCarthy	1	122
Fiction Chronicle: The Fox in the Attic, by Richard Hughes; The End of the Battle, by Evelyn Waugh; The Mighty and Their Fall, by Ivy Compton-Burnett; Island, by Aldous Huxley; Border Country, by Raymond Williams; Key to the Door, by Alan Sillitoe	3	466
KUNITZ, STANLEY		
The Cold War and the West (symposium)	1	40
LARNER, JEREMY		
Salinger: An Explanation	4	594
LEONOV, LEONID		
Comment on PR's Russian Issue	2	300
LESSING, DORIS		
From the Black Notebook	2	196
LICHTHEIM, GEORGE		
The Cold War and the West (symposium)	1	42
LOWELL, ROBERT		
The Cold War and the West (symposium)	1	47
Eye and Tooth; Alfred Corning Clark (poems)	1	90
New York 1962: Fragment; Fall 1961; The Old Flame; Water; Florence; Middle Age (poems)	3	366
MACDONALD, DWIGHT		
(br) Pale Fire. By Vladimir Nabokov	3	437
MALAMUD, BERNARD		
Still Life	1	95
MARCUS, STEVEN		
The Novel Again	2	171
MARSHALL, LENORE G.		
All My Dear Dead (poem)	1	94
MCCARTHY, MARY		
The Cold War and the West (symposium)	1	47
(br) Curtains. By Kenneth Tynan	1	140
MERRILL, JAMES		
Driver	4	491
PODHORETZ, NORMAN		
The Cold War and the West (symposium)	1	56
POLLOCK, WILSON		
(br) The Pat Hobby Stories. By F. Scott Fitzgerald	3	464

	Issue	Page
RALEIGH, JOHN HENRY		
The "Truth"	2	270
America Revisited	3	425
RICH, ADRIENNE		
Snapshots of a Daughter-in-Law (poem)	4	535
RIESMAN, DAVID		
The Cold War and the West (symposium)	1	63
Intellectuals and the Discontented Classes	2	250
ROSENBERG, HAROLD		
The Cold War and the West (symposium)	1	74
Gorky and History: An Exchange	4	587
SCHLESINGER, ARTHUR, JR.		
The Cold War and the West (symposium)	1	77
SEIDEL, FREDERICK		
A Widower (poem)	2	238
SHAPIRO, KARL		
The Bourgeois Poet (poem)	3	406
SNOW, C. P.		
The Cold War and the West (symposium)	1	81
SONTAG, SUSAN		
(br) The Slave. By Isaac Bashevis Singer	3	460
SPENDER, STEPHEN		
The Modern as Vision of a Whole Situation	3	350
STRACHEY, JOHN		
Communist Intentions	2	215
THOMPSON, JOHN		
(br) Ship of Fools. By Katherine Anne Porter	4	608
VAZAKAS, BYRON		
Opera Comique (poem)	2	240
WILBUR, RICHARD		
The Existential Hero	4	603
WOLLHEIM, RICHARD		
London Letter	2	263
WRONG, DENNIS H.		
The Cold War and the West (symposium)	1	83

ST. MARTIN'S BOOKS

of special interest



THE GREEK STONES SPEAK

The Story of Archaeology in Greek Lands. by Paul MacKendrick

A handsome account of the exciting record revealed by archaeology from the era of Homer to the Roman occupation. By the author of *The Mute Stones Speak*, Professor of Classics, University of Wisconsin. With plans and more than 175 superb photographs. \$7.50

CATHERINE DE MEDICI

by Jean Héritier

This new book by the author of the outstanding biography of Mary Queen of Scots restores Catherine to her place as the "grand roi" of 16th century France. The author makes use of material discovered since Van Dyke's 1923 biography. \$7.50

STRIKE THE FATHER DEAD

A novel by John Wain

A vital novel about an English boy who runs away from school and father to become a jazz pianist. "Succeeds splendidly in what few novels now attempt—the conveyance of joy . . . entertains continuously."—*London Sunday Times* \$4.95

JAMPOT SMITH

A novel by Jeremy Brooks

The poignant story by the well known critic for *The Times* and *The Observer*. "Good novels about calf love are rare. . . . Mr. Brooks's gift is that he can describe simultaneously the pleasures of adolescence and its pains."—*The Observer* \$4.50

CHAMBER'S BIOGRAPHICAL DICTIONARY

(New Edition (1962) The Great of All Nations and All Times

"In format and typography, this volume is a great improvement. . . . The price is modest and the quality of writing is especially good. The work has been completely revised and updated. A convenient volume for ready reference."—*Library Journal* 4,000 new entries, more than 15,000 in all. \$15.00

CHATEAUBRIAND

by Friedrich Sieburg

"Ranks with the best of current biography. . . . A dazzling personal drama . . . an historical spellbinder."—*Virginia Kirkus* \$5.95

MY LIFE AND MUSIC

by Artur Schnabel

The famous musician's own story of his many-faceted career. With revealing sidelights on notable contemporaries. \$4.50

W. B. YEATS, 1865-1939

Second Edition. by Joseph Hone

Long out of print, this definitive biography is based on private papers and personal interviews with Mrs. Yeats. \$7.00

INTERPRETING MOZART ON THE KEYBOARD

by Eva and Paul Badura-Skoda

An invaluable work, based on extensive research and years of performing experience. With 675 musical examples, 8 pages of plates. \$15.00

ST MARTIN'S PRESS, 175 Fifth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y.
Affiliated Publishers: Macmillan Co. Ltd., London, Bombay, Calcutta,
Madras, Melbourne; The Macmillan Company of Canada, Ltd.



"NOONDAY'S
excellent
Reader's Guide
series continues
its fine
introductions
to the works
of distinguished
writers."

—SATURDAY REVIEW

The Guides are comprehensive textual interpretations by some of the best critical minds in the country. Available in inexpensive editions.

T. S. ELIOT

by George Williamson

W. B. YEATS

by John Unterecker

LITERARY TERMS

by Karl Beckson &
Arthur Ganz

JAMES JOYCE

by William York Tindall

**GREAT 20TH CENTURY
ENGLISH NOVELS**

by Frederick R. Karl &
Marvin Magalaner

JOSEPH CONRAD

by Frederick R. Karl

HERMAN MELVILLE

by James E. Miller, Jr.

MARCEL PROUST

by Milton Hindus

DYLAN THOMAS

by William York Tindall

**THE CONTEMPORARY
ENGLISH NOVEL**

by Frederick R. Karl

Now at your bookstore
NOONDAY PRESS

A subsidiary of
FARRAR, STRAUS & CUDAHY
19 Union Square West, New York 3